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THE

MODERN CYMON,

FROM THE

"JEAN",

OF

C. PAUL DE KOCK.

"Notre gloire est souvent l'ouvrage d'un sourire."

LEGOUVÉ, *Mérite des Femmes.*

VOL. I.

PHILADELPHIA:

CAREY, LEA AND BLANCHARD.

1833.

SIMON RODENBURGH.

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TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

It seems to be pretty generally admitted, that the French character has materially changed of late years; and those who have witnessed the scenes at a Negro festival, or an Irish fair, are not particularly struck with the gaiety of the lower orders in France. But the explanation of the change is sufficiently simple. Every acquisition of value is attended with care, and men become less exhilarated as they recede from the slavery of the one, or the wretched subserviency of the other. As the French have ascended in the political scale, they feel more like men, and the wild recklessness of the slave (however it may have been tempered by the amenities of social life) has given place to the more staid demeanour of the freeman. Formerly, the whole nation was divided into classes, and the description of any particular character was the description of a class. Now that every man feels at liberty both to act and think for himself, a free bent is given to the peculiar fancies and whims of the individual. It follows, therefore, that however we may have been right formerly in denying the French a claim to humour, we can do so no longer; and with a wide and rich field before him, one fully equal to the task has arisen, and with a master's hand pourtrayed the humours and foibles of his countrymen.

C. Paul de Kock has been long appreciated on the continent, but has never yet appeared in an English dress. Unfortunately, a picture of *life as it is* amongst our neighbours is marked by traits of so free a nature, that were we to judge of the state of morals in France from the scenes in which our author revels, and which are read without the smallest scruple by every French woman, we should place them at a low ebb indeed. But every country has its own peculiarities, and things which here could not be even alluded to, are there made subjects of common conversation.

It is proposed to give a translation of his best works, carefully weeded from the indelicacy and impiety from which scarcely any French work is entirely exempt. A more thorough insight into French manners and customs may be acquired from one of De Kock's novels, than from fifty volumes of travels; and an English father may judge from the portrait of a Frenchwoman (painted by a countryman, recollect,) how much he is likely to gain by educating his family abroad. As a novelist, De Kock may not possess the humour of a Fielding or a Smollett, though the reader will meet with many scenes not unworthy of those authors; whilst he will be constantly reminded throughout of the quiet humour and happy keeping of character for which Miss Austen stands unrivalled. Like her, he takes his characters from the middle ranks of life, and so accurately are the several parts sustained, that there is no mistaking the different speakers in the several dialogues with which his volumes abound, being eminently dramatic in their composition. He himself may be perfectly known from his works—a thorough *ba-*

daud, he admires nothing out of Paris, and never mentions a foreigner but with contempt.

It would seem we have changed too — we once taught the French to be *comfortable:* it appears, by De Kock's frequent use of the word, that we have now taught them to be *fashionable.* Have we gained by the change?

London, February 1, 1833.

THE MODERN CYMON.

CHAPTER I.

The clock at St. Paul's church struck one; for a long time silence had reigned in the now deserted streets; the inhabitants of the seventh arrondessement slept, or at least were in bed, which is not, to be sure, quite the same thing; in the densely-inhabited Rue St. Antoine were to be seen but a few passengers hastening to their homes, and a few of those worthies who, from want of a home, are fain to parade the streets the live-long night. The first might be known by their hurried step, and by their crossing the street to avoid an encounter with any person approaching them; the others loitered from house to house. The moon, which was shining bright, threw her light alike on all, and that all is not little, when we consider there is but one moon for the four quarters of the world, and that she must serve as a watch-light to the inhabitants of Europe and Asia — that her beams are reflected, at the same moment, by the waters of the Nile and Tiber — that she throws her floods of brightness on the vast plains of America and the deserts of Arabia, and her mild lustre calls into new beauty the smiling banks of the Rhone and

the cataracts of Niagara — the ruins of Memphis and the buildings of Paris — quite enough for one moon, certainly.

M. Francis Durand, herbalist, in the Rue St. Paul, was a man of about forty years of age, who stuck close to his business as much from taste as from its having proved a lucrative concern: he flattered himself there was not a botanist in Paris could compete with him in the knowledge of herbs, and of course he felt very indignant when he was called a seedsman, as he sometimes was, by people who ought to have known better. He had been in bed since eleven o'clock, according to his invariable custom, which he had never broken, even on the day of his marriage; and M. Francis Durand had been twelve years united in holy matrimony with Miss Felicia Legros, daughter of a cloth-merchant in the city.

M. Durand, then, was in bed, and alone, for a reason which you shall soon know. M. Durand slept soundly, because his deep knowledge of simples did not so far excite his mind as to interfere with his repose. His maid, Catherine, had been for some time shaking his arm, and bawling in his ear, before he opened his eyes, and, raising his head from the pillow, asked, "What do you want? what's the matter? eh, Catherine?"

"What's the matter, sir? Why, have not I been telling you for the last quarter of an hour that my mistress is in great pain — that she is getting worse and worse, and that, in a very short time, the business will all be over."

M. Durand raised himself on his elbow, pushed his nightcap back on his head, and, gazing with a vacant countenance on his maid — "Why, what's the matter with my wife?"

"Matter with your wife!" screamed Catherine,

again shaking the drowsy herbalist; "why, don't you recollect the situation of my mistress? — that she expects every moment to ——"

"Ah, parbleu! that's true," said M. Durand, rousing himself; "my dream had made me forget every thing. I dreamt I was in a field picking sorrel, when, all at once ——"

"Upon my word, a pretty time to be telling dreams! I tell you my mistress is very ill. Run, fetch the doctor and nurse. You know Madame Moka, Rue Nonaindières; make haste, sir, whilst I return to my mistress, who ought not to be left alone."

So saying, she quitted the little closet where M. Durand had been sleeping, in the expectancy of that event with which he had just been made acquainted. This loft served as a store, and the walls were furnished with shelves, loaded with plants and roots, whilst others were hung to dry on cords, which were suspended from the roof in every direction. Under these aromatics M. Durand found a temporary couch, so that when he got out of bed, he might have been mistaken for a hortus siccus.

"Well, well, Catherine, I'll go, I'll run," said the herbalist yawning; but all at once it occurred to him, how odd it was his wife should be taken ill at night, when he had settled in his own mind that she would be delivered in the day time —"but I suppose," thought he, "a man may be very easily mistaken in affairs of this kind. Now as to simples and their properties, he would be a clever fellow indeed who would find me astray there. I am sure I know the names of two thousand plants, — ah, more than two thousand; and I know them in Latin, which is more again; but in my dream it was Burdock; and then

all at once it was not that, but something else, which for the soul of me I cannot—"

In trying to recollect his dream, M. Durand's head fell on the pillow, his eyes closed, and he was soon snoring again, no doubt with the view of dreaming out his dream.

Catherine had returned to her mistress, whom she found still suffering, and fretting herself at the non-arrival of the accoucheur, who she was persuaded would never come in time. Madame Durand was the more uneasy, as, though approaching to her thirty-fifth year, she had never been a mother, though most ardently desiring that event.

"Well Catherine," she exclaimed, as her maid returned.

"My master slept as if he was deaf; but I awoke him at last. He has run off for the nurse and midwife."

"Ah! I hope he will make haste. Oh! how I suffer! But then what pleasure I shall feel in embracing my own child!"

"Ah, to be sure, yes, after twelve years' marriage—time was slipping away. I am sure it will be a boy. I have betted an ounce of snuff with Madame Moka, who says it will be a girl."

"Ah! boy or girl, I shall love them equally well."

"I have a great mind to call our neighbour, Madame Ledoux."

"Oh, presently, Catherine; but I have not heard the street door shut; are you sure your master is gone?"

"Why he ought by this time to be in the Rue St. Nonaindières."

"Go see, Catherine."

The servant, by way of satisfying her mistress, returned to the garret, and, long before she reached the

bed, was saluted by the strong steady snoring of M. Durand. Catherine was a bouncing lively girl of about twenty-eight years of age; having lived as a faithful servant eight years in the family, she occasionally took a little liberty with her master. She felt very angry on finding him again asleep, and immediately seized on the warm blankets, under which the poor herbalist had ensconced himself, and threw them on the floor. It was the month of March, and very cold, and Catherine thought with justice, that the nipping air would most effectually arouse her master. This operation disclosed M. Durand in an extremely simple dress; but in cases of emergency, age or sex should no longer be thought of.

Catherine's plan succeeded. M. Durand felt the keen wind blowing on him, and turned and turned again, without getting at all the warmer. At length he opened his heavy eyes, and was not a little surprised at finding the servant at his bed side, and himself so totally devoid of covering.

"What's the matter Catherine?" said M. Durand gravely, trying to pull down the tail of an extremely scanty shirt.

"What, Sir! is it possible that you have gone to sleep again, after my telling you that Madame was so ill, and when we thought you had gone for the midwife and nurse?"

"Ah, my God, you are right, Catherine; it was that made me dream I was at a baptism."

"Well, sir, but the child must be born before it is baptized."

"That's true; but how the devil came I in *naturalibus*?"

"Come, come, I will not leave the room again till I see you out. Here are your stockings, and your pantaloons."

"Well, then Catherine, since you are not afraid of my dressing before you—"

"Afraid, indeed! a pretty thing to be afraid of when Madame is so ill!"

M. Durand made up his mind to get out of bed, and throwing off his night-cap, disclosed a round grey head, red cheeks, a bottle-nose, and little grey eyes; all this supported by a body neither small nor large, neither fat nor thin, made one of those kind of men so often seen, and of whom it is impossible to form any opinion till you hear them speak.

"Here's your waistcoat."

"It's dreadfully cold to night, Catherine!

"Come, sir, make haste, here's your cravat—"

"And my garters, Catherine, you did not give me them."

"Gracious me, can't you go without garters at this time of night?"

"Stay, I see one near the strawberry-plants, *fraga fragorum*. Provided the accoucheur is at home—"

"Here sir, here is your coat."

"Stay a moment, Catherine, my cravat."

"Ah, sir, if you don't make a little more haste—"

"My hat, then — Oh, how cold it is to night!"

"Run, sir, run; that will warm you."

"I will put this warm handkerchief round my neck; and then, — Catherine, mind that parcel of sage, *salvia salviæ*, which has fallen from the shelf."

By way of reply, Catherine pushed her master out of the room, ran down the stairs before him, opened the back door into the alley, and shut it in M. Durand's face, just as he had turned round to retrace his steps to his room for his pocket-handkerchief, which he had forgotten.

Satisfied that her master was gone at last, Catherine ran to call Madame Ledoux, who lodged on the

second floor, and when she had awakened her, she returned to her mistress.

Madame Ledoux was the widow of a bailiff, an upholsterer, and a stationer; she had had by her three husbands fourteen children, of whom six were married and settled in the world; nevertheless, she was only forty-nine years old, a tall, thin woman, stiff and unbending in her person, with a well-curled wig, and a stiffly-starched collar most regularly plaited. No wonder then she was well satisfied with her own appearance, and gave the world to understand she had repeatedly refused a fourth husband; and when a woman has had fourteen children, her opinion in similar cases ought to have great weight; thus Madame Ledoux, who flattered herself that in case of necessity she could act as midwife, was by no means disturbed by Catherine's summons; it was a pleasure to her to witness the entry into the world of a little innocent; and as all women have not this taste, when such an event was about to take place in that neighbourhood, it was rare indeed that the parties interested did not apply to the widow of the stationer, the upholsterer, and bailiff. At Catherine's first summons, she replied, "Here I am, I'll follow you; I'll just put on my gown and go down." And in fact, the servant had scarce entered her mistress's chamber, when the door again opened and they saw Madame Ledoux, who, with the candle in her hand, her immense height—white dressing-gown, and cap stuck on the top of her head, would have made an excellent ghost in an old castle.

"Well, neighbour, has the time arrived?"

"Oh, yes, Madame Ledoux, I believe this time there can be no mistake," replied Madame Durand.

"So much the better, neighbour: night is a better time to be ill than the day, there is less noise to

annoy you. I had my first three—my fifth, and my last four in the night."

"And the accoucher—the nurse,—not one is here!"

"Well, and what then? A'n't I with you? and a'n't I worth them all? My eighth child—it was a boy,—he who died of a billious fever; great pity,—for he was a fine child, with a Grecian nose: he was by the upholsterer. I was alone, just as you are now, neighbour. I had sent away my servant the evening before, because she robbed me, and my husband was travelling, and far away. Well, I was not frightened, but made all my little arrangements"——

"Catherine, is not M. Durand returned yet?"

"Returned," said Catherine; "oh, no, Madame, he could not have returned yet—but I told him to run very fast."

M. Durand had been gone nearly three quarters of an hour, and no one appeared—yet the accoucheur and nurse lived at no great distance. Madame D. and Catharine had lost all patience, whilst Madame Ledoux endeavoured to tranquilize them.

When he had gone about a hundred yards, the herbalist recollected that he had not asked whether he was to call the accoucheur or nurse first. He stopped, and was half disposed to turn back, when he reflected that the accoucheur ought certainly to be called first; so turning towards the Rue St. Antoine, muttering to himself, he said, "Confound it, how cold it is! and Catherine would not give me time to look for my garters; if my stockings come down I shall never escape the rheumatism. I'll take pretty good care never to have a child again—that is to say, to be born in the winter. To be turned out alone in the street, in the middle of the night!—I ought to have routed out my friend Bellequeue, as he is god-

father—it was almost as much his business as mine; a godfather is nearly the same as a father. And there was a woman robbed only eight days ago, in Rue Petit Musc;— but they will be deucedly clever if they rob me, for I have nothing to be robbed of, not even a watch. But here is the Rue St. Antoine: how different a street looks in the night from the day; I hardly know one house from another. Hem! hem! — I have caught cold already. When I get home, I will take an infusion of violets with some orange-leaves in it—*malus aurea*."

Talking to himself in this way, M. Durand traversed that part of the Rue St. Antoine where the moon shone, — keeping a most respectful distance from the darkened side. A few steps nearer, and the herbalist would have gained the accoucheur's abode, which he could already see, although it was the shaded side, which not a little discomfited him; but, on throwing a fearful glance across, he was horrified by the apparition of a man standing exactly opposite the house he wished to enter. The herbalist came to a dead stop, then took two or three steps, feeling for his pocket handkerchief, no longer recollecting that he had left it at home. He then wiped the cold sweat from his forehead with the handkerchief he had tied round his neck, and stood with his eyes fixed on the man whom he perceived through the darkness. "There's some one there: a man, perhaps two. It's so dark there's no telling; but he is not in the dark there for nothing. What man is it? — if it was a question of simples now, I could tell about them and their properties. Confound the man! — exactly in front of the doctor's house. I am unarmed — that infernal Catherine hurried me so. What shall I do? I believe I had better go first to Madame Moka; I can come back here, and by that time, perhaps the man

will be gone. It is very odd, it is not near so cold as it was."

Whilst M. Durand was thus cogitating, and taking very good care to keep in the moonlight, and at a safe distance from the object of his suspicion, the man remained before the house, and being extremely drunk, was doing his utmost to keep his legs and prevent himself from rolling in the mud. Before going home to his wife he had endeavoured to count how much of his wages he had left; and having dropped half his money in the gutter, he was making fruitless attempts at finding it again — "Curse the night — why the devil don't they put lanthorns on the dark side I have lost at least fifteen sous; I wish I had drunk it all. Wife will jaw me: don't care if she does. Oh, if some one would pass and help me to look! These infernal legs won't hold me up. The money's all my eye — must have rolled in the mud."

Tired of his useless search, the drunkard staggered away, without having noticed Durand, who began to breathe freely again, when he saw the man make off in a different direction, and he determined to creep to the doctor's house, saying to himself — "He did not dare to encounter me. My determined appearance alarmed him. No, no: I am not the man to be put down easily. Besides, who could think of danger with an heir in question."

M. Durand took one more look to be sure the man was out of sight: then running across to the accoucheur's house, he pulled violently at the night-bell, keeping a good look out at the same time, that the dreaded stranger did not return. A window was opened on the second floor, and a voice asked who was there. "It's I, Durand, herbalist of the Rue St. Paul, and I have come for the doctor as my wife is unwell."

"The doctor has just been called out to a patient, but the instant that he returns——"

"Not within! the devil!" said Durand. "Really now when a child is coming into the world, and I the father of it"— the herbalist stopped short, for who should he see coming towards him but the man who had so much alarmed him a short time before. The drunkard had not gone far, when he was half determined to return and have another search for his money; and just then he heard Durand's voice, which he had no manner of doubt was that of some person who was calling him back, having picked up his money. As this joyful idea crossed his mind, he hastened back as fast as his trembling limbs would carry him, crying with a thick voice, "Here, here I am, my dear fren — friend: it's my mon — money— wait."

Durand, who had little taste for the encounter, and heard nothing but threats in the drunken entreaties of his tormentor, took to his heels, and was followed as well as he was able by the sot; but whom he quickly distanced, though fully persuaded he was at his heels the whole time. He at length reached the Rue Nonaindières, scarcely able to breathe, and having forgotten the number of the house he was in search of, he seized on the first rapper he reached with both hands, and gave half a dozen thundering knocks in quick succession, sufficiently loud to arouse the whole street. As he was not instantly answered, he gave another peal, and a half a dozen windows were opened at once, and as many frightened voices exclaimed, "What's the matter? what do you want?"

"Help! help! help!" exclaimed the herbalist, half dead with fright, and still knocking in a frantic manner, though they beseeched him to desist.

"But what's the matter? what ails you? is there a house on fire?"

"Help! help! at my house—herbalist—Rue St. Paul."

M. Durand could say no more; he saw the dreaded stranger was nearing him, and darting down the street as fast as he could run, he turned and doubled, till, without well knowing how, he reached his door, and opening it with a latch-key which Catherine had slipped into his pocket, he hurried into his alley with all the feelings of a man who has just had an escape for his life.

Madame Durand's sufferings had increased. Hearing the door of the alley shut violently, she cried, "Here they are at last!" But M. Durand entered alone, pale, horror-struck, and his forehead bathed in sweat, with his stockings over his heels. He sank exhausted into a chair.

"Ah, my dear, you have run fast," said Madame Durand, who had a minute's respite from pain.

"Yes—yes—I did run certainly," said M. Durand, casting a wild look round, as if not quite sure that he was even now in safety.

"Nevertheless we thought the time long enough," said Madame Ledoux,

"And I, too; do you think I was very comfortable in the streets?"

"The accoucheur—is he coming, my dear?"

"Yes, yes, every body is coming; I did my best—"

"But what's the matter, sir," said Catherine, "you look as if you had seen something."

"Eh! seen something! I was attacked by a robber—two or three robbers. They followed me a considerable time, and if I had not had strength enough—to run away—it was all over with me."

"Oh my poor husband!"

"I assure you, Madame, this child has cost me not a little—"

"Ah, neighbour, that's exactly the way with my thirteenth. My husband, the stationer, went out just as you did, to call the accoucheur. We lived at that time in Rue des Lions, and you know it is not in the very best neighbourhood: it was about three o'clock; the night dark as pitch; and I recollect it had rained all the evening. In turning the corner of the Rue des Lions, my husband heard footsteps. Fortunately, I had made him take his——"

"Oh!" cried Madame Durand, "Ah, there, it is returned again."

"Who's returned?" said the herbalist, starting up and looking behind him.

"Faith sir," said Catherine, "here's my mistress, as bad as possible, and no sign of any accoucheur!"

Just then, a violent knocking was heard at the door of the alley. The servant hastened down, without waiting for a light; she ran and opened the door, calling to the persons in the street, "Come in, come in! follow me: you are just in time!" and poor Catherine was again at her mistress's bed side in an instant.

"Oh, Madame!" she cried, "here they are all come;" and as she spoke the steps of several people were heard on the stairs. The door was thrown open violently, and a corporal at the head of four soldiers, entered the room, crying out, "Where are the robbers?"

At that very instant of time the crisis had arrived, and Madame Durand ushered a boy into the world, which Madame Ledoux received in her arms, saying, "He will be just as strong as my fourteenth."

M. Durand sunk back into his chair, as he gazed

on the soldiers with lack-lustre eyes, muttering, "Gentlemen, it is a boy!"

"It is a boy!" repeated Catherine. And the corporal, turning round to his men, who were all lost in astonishment, re-echoed, "Ah! it is a boy."

CHAPTER II.

After the first moments of grief and joy, which the presence of the new-born had occasioned, who had come into the world graced by the presence of a corporal and four soldiers, each began to eye his neighbour, and to ask an explanation of this curious scene.

"Well, my brave fellow," cried the corporal, "I suppose it was as witnesses to the birth of your son that you sent for us?"

"My dear, what were you thinking of?" said Madame Durand.

"To bring a regiment of soldiers here!" muttered Catherine.

"For certain," said Madame Ledoux, "I have had fourteen myself, and have seen upwards of one hundred born; but this is the most military lying-in I ever witnessed."

M. Durand, who had by this time recovered from his fright and surprise, said, "I never required your services, gentlemen, and I have no conception what brought you hither."

"We came here by desire of two young men of

Rue Nonaindières, who ran to our guard-house and begged us to go as quickly as possible to the herbalist's in Rue St. Paul, who had awakened the whole street by his cries for help: that's what brought us here, my good man."

M. Durand bit his lips at this recital, and Catherine turned her head away to prevent laughing in her master's face. Madame Ledoux exclaimed, "There is some mistake—you seem to have alarmed the neighbourhood unawares."

M. Durand pretended not to be able to understand how the mistake could have arisen, and whilst they were discussing the point, they heard the shrill voice of Madame Moka, who cried, "Hold a light! Catherine, here's the doctor!"

"High time, indeed;" said Madame Ledoux.

The accoucheur and nurse in fact, arrived the day after the fair; and the nurse would not have come at all, but that she had heard M. Durand's house was on fire. The first thing was to get rid of the soldiers, but as they were present at the birth of his son, M. Durand would not allow them to go away without drinking his health.

Catherine was therefore desired to take them into the shop, and to give each of them a dram. M. Durand followed, in order to give them their choice of a little violet or linden-water, but they one and all professed to be quite satisfied with the brandy.

"To the health of the new-born," said the corporal, emptying his glass; the soldiers followed the example of their leader.

M. Durand bent his head, and swallowed a large glass of sugared water, saying, "To the health of my young son — *primogenitus*."

"To the health of little Primogenitus!" cried the corporal, thinking that was the child's name.

Catherine clapped her hands; "Ah, he will be a fine fellow," said she, "already to have his health drank by soldiers!"

The corporal twisted his moustaches and vouchsafed a gracious smile to Catherine.

"And my mistress! won't you drink her health also?" said she.

"Well recollected, my girl," replied the corporal, holding out his little glass; "it would be a thousand pities to forget the mamma."

M. Durand mixed another glass of water and sugar, whilst Catharine filled the glasses of the soldiers, who, with one voice, drank "to the health of the lady in the straw."

"To my wife's health — *mea uxor!*" said M. Durand, clearing off his glass.

"My poor dear mistress!" said Catherine, "what she has suffered!"

"I think," said the corporal, turning towards his men, "we should be wrong to forget the papa."

"Certainly, certainly;" replied the soldiers, holding out their glasses immediately to Catherine, whilst the herbalist prepared for a third mixture of sugar and water.

"Comrades, the papa's health!" cried the corporal, holding up his glass; the soldiers did the same.

M. Durand made a point of hob-nobbing with them, and bowing profoundly, he said, "Gentlemen, here 's my health — *suum cuique.* I drink your toast with the greatest pleasure."

The soldiers were getting quite at home, and seemed to be ready to drink the health of any other relation or friend of the family; but M. Durand, who could scarcely get down his last glass of sugar and water, affected to believe they were pressed for time, and opening the door, bowed them into the street.

By this time all was quiet in the sick-room: the doctor had given his directions; the nurse had taken her post; Catherine had kissed the infant, and laid it by its mother's side; who found in the assurance of that fact, a full compensation for all her sufferings. Madame Ledoux had retired to her own room, and M. Durand, after kissing his wife on the forehead, returned to his bed, saying, "This has been a trying night for my wife and me."

It was hardly six in the morning, when a little man was seen ringing at the herbalist's door. This little gentleman, who was in dressing gown and slippers, and wore no hat, had his hair powdered and frizzed as if dressed for a ball: two large curls hung over each ear, and his hair behind was gathered into a pigtail which, though short, was very thick, and being tied round with a black ribbon, played gracefully from side to side of his neck. True, it was no longer the fashion to wear powder and pomatum; but the gentleman we have been describing had his reasons for continuing the powder: he was a hair-dresser and wig-maker, and had been heard to declare that the political changes in Europe might be many and great; but that nothing would ever induce him to cut off his tail.

M. Bellequeue, the name of the hair-dresser, (and well named he was) was thirty-six years of age: his face round and fresh: his nose, although rather large, not ill made; his eyes, although rather small, sparkled like two diamonds; his mouth, perhaps too open, disclosed extremely good teeth, joined to which his eyebrows were black, his cheeks rosy, his waist small, and his legs well made: it is no wonder, then, that with pleasing manners, M. Bellequeue had the reputation in the neighbourhood of being an extremely well bred man, a great admirer of the fair sex, and

credit for dressing hair with as much taste as any one even in the Palais Royal.

Catherine opened the door, when M. Bellequeue ran in, saying, "Well, my dear, so all is over! all is well. I have just met the doctor at one of my customers."

"Yes, M. Bellequeue, all is over, thank God! My poor mistress! what she has suffered!"

"And we have a boy!"

"Yes, Sir, a thumping boy, who is as handsome"—

"Who is he like, Catherine?

"Egad, Sir, it is hard to say yet; though I think he is rather more like mistress."

"So much the better, for Durand is no great beauty. I shall be delighted to see this child, for I feel as if —— I am to be his godfather."

"Yes, Sir, but you can't see him yet, for he is on my mistress's bed, who I should think, is still asleep; for we have had a busy night of it. What do you think of my master's bringing the patrol here?"

"Bah! soldiers!"

"Yes, Sir, with their bayonets fixed!"

"Why, what the devil could Durand have been thinking of? And good breeding! for one should never forget one's manners with the ladies. Catherine, I must begin the day well by kissing you."

"Oh, sir?"

M. Bellequeue kissed Catherine on both cheeks; then stepping softly up to the loft, he found M. Durand dressing himself. "Good day, my dear Durand. Well, we are papa now."

"Yes, my dear M. Bellequeue, we are."

"I wish you joy most sincerely, my friend."

"Thank you, thank you. I know, M. Bellequeue, the sincere attachment which you have to all my family. For which reason both my wife and I are

determined to make you godfather to our child, in preference to some near relations who might expect that compliment. But a friend before all the world."

"Believe me, my dear Durand, I estimate your attention as I ought. I will be a second father to your son, and trust that he will always consider me as such. By the bye who is to be my gossip?"

"An aunt of my wife's."

"How old may she be?"

"I should think about fifty-five—an extremely respectable woman."

Bellequeue made a wry face, muttering to himself, "Two boxes of comfits will do."

M. Durand, as he finished dressing, related the strange events of the night.

"You should have called on me" said the hairdresser, "and I would have gone with you. You know that I am a smart blade. I would have taken my sword-cane with me, and we would have settled these rascals. What is it that you are drinking?"

"Some linseed tea; to prevent any ill consequences from the shock of last night. I intended to have taken something vulnerary, but as I did not fall—"

"Eh—I think I hear some one crying."

Ah! No doubt it is the little stranger. He has done nothing else all night."

"What a fine mellow voice he has. I must go and kiss him—no doubt his crying has awakened his mamma."

M. Bellequeue dragged the herbalist after him to the lady's room, who was sitting up in bed, already dressed in a very pretty morning cap; for once out of pain, a woman's first thought is to look well.

Madame Durand smiled graciously on the perruquier, who stepped on tiptoe to the bed-side, where

the nurse presented him the child, saying, "What a handsome fellow he is." Bellequeue kissed the child affectionately and hung over him in the most languishing manner, whilst M. Durand peeping over his shoulder and looking at the child, said, "He has my chin to a nicety, and the shape of his head is exactly the same."

"Ye-e-s," said Bellequeue, "I think there is a kind of a something. When is he to be baptized?"

"To morrow, gossip, if you please."

"How — if I please, my pretty gossip? don't you know I am always ready?"

"Write at once to the nurse, M. Durand. You know St. Germain."

"St. Germain-en-laye, is not it?"

"Yes, my dear, en-laye, and take care you do not forget to write to our friends and relations. You know, I made out a list."

"Yes, Madame: how shall I get through all this? My dear M. Bellequeue, could you spare me a moment to help me with these letters?"

"Willingly: it is still early, and the fashionable ladies whom I have to dress won't be up yet a while."

"Come down to my desk." M. Durand led the way to his shop. Bellequeue kissed the lady in the straw, and looked all the godfather at the child, and then followed the herbalist, as usual, on the points of his toes, a habit he had long ago contracted, in picking his way through the dirty streets, from one customer's house to another.

The herbalist scratched his head and bit the top of his pen, saying, "How shall we phrase these letters? You see, this being a first child, I have no practice. If it were a prescription for a sedative or aperient draught, I should be quite up to it."

"Oh, then, you are a bit of a doctor, are you ?" said Bellequeue, sitting down opposite to him.

"Why, I am thoroughly acquainted with simples. I have botanised at Pentin, St. Denis, Fontenay, Severes. When I walk in the country I stop at every step — I look in every corner."

"You must have seen, then, some very strange things — but, we are forgetting my godson. You must write a circular that will do for all."

"Ah ! exactly so, a circular."

"Although I am bachelor, I assure you, I have often helped a husband. One always begins in this way — 'I have the honour to inform you.' "

"Ah, exactly so, I only wanted a beginning."

M. Durand took a sheet of paper, and wrote "I have the honour to inform you — that my wife is delivered of her first—" "Will that do ?"

"Very well," said Bellequeue ; "go on."

"The infant is a boy."

"Extremely well turned."

"The infant is a thriving child — and all the family are quite well."—"I think that says every thing, does not it ?"

"The very thing ! could not be better. Here, I will make some copies for you."

This important business settled, Bellequeue left Durand, promising to call again in the course of the day; and as the christening of to-morrow must necessarily be followed by a family dinner, the herbalist's household was put in requisition to celebrate in a fitting manner the birth of his son and heir.

M. Durand, nailed to his counter, began already to think of what he should make his son; and, whilst dispensing camomile and poppy-seed, saw him in his mind's eye invested with an advocate's gown, or bedizened in the uniform of a colonel. Madame Durand

pictured to herself her child old enough to give her his arm, and to accompany her in her walks. Her son would be handsome, well-made, witty. She saw all this whilst looking on the little doll that could scarcely open its eyes. She laid plans — plans : who does not ? But those of a mother are very pleasing, and at least are not always traced in sand.

Bellequeue returned in the afternoon. M. Durand had run up for a moment to his wife, and they were puzzling themselves what name to give the child, when the godfather arrived just in time to settle the question.

"What do you call yourself, my dear Bellequeue ?" said the herbalist.

"What do I call myself ?"

"Yes, gossip, what is your Christian name," said the lady. We were thinking of a pretty name for my son."

"My dear gossip, my name is Jean Bellequeue, at your service."

"Only Jean ?"

"Nothing more : I see no great use in having a dozen names. All that is worth care is not to disgrace that which we bear ; to be well-bred, and, above all things, polite to the ladies."

Madame Durand made no reply, but did not look over-well pleased ; because the name of Jean did not strike her as very genteel or celebrated. She wished her son to have a name pretty, and, at the same time, high sounding.

As to M. Durand, he muttered between his teeth, John, *Johannes* — well enough. I should have preferred, though, a name of some meaning ; for instance, *Geranium*, *Rosarium Stramonium*."

"Ah neighbour, those names smell of the shop dreadfully."

"Not at all, my dear Bellequeue; on the contrary——"

"How can you go on so," said Madame Durand; "did you ever hear of a Geranium in the calender?"

"Egad, gossip, you may call your son what you please; but as far as it depends on me, his name is Jean, for Jean is as good a name as any other."

"Oh my dear friend, I don't mean to say that it is ugly — it is rather short to be sure."

"So much the better, it is soon said."

"We shall hear what my aunt thinks of it. I believe her name is Ursula."

"I will never call my son Ursula," said the herbalist; "Jean is much better."

"Well, well, we'll settle all that to-morrow; at what hour does the ceremony take place?"

"At twelve."

"Very well, I shall be punctual."

"Recollect, you dine with us."

"Yes, my dear gossip, with pleasure. But I must now leave you to go and make my purchases."

"Now, don't be foolish, M. Bellequeue. I will have no folly."

"Tush, tush, that is my business. Farewell."

Bellequeue ran out to avoid listening to Madame Durand, who declared she should be very much annoyed if he went to any expence on her account.

After a night, which would have passed very quietly had the little stranger been silent, which he did not find it convenient to be, as he cried for five consecutive hours, the baptismal morn appeared, accompanied with a pleasant small rain, or rather hail, for it froze as it fell, and rendered the streets extremely slippery. Fortunately the nurse arrived safe. She was a ruddy countrywoman of four-and-

twenty, whose husband let out asses to the inhabitants of St. Germain's, whilst his wife disposed of something better to the little ones of the metropolis. When Madame Ledoux saw her, she said she was as like as two peas to the nurse of her twelfth, the child of the stationer.

The party most interested in this affair, was probably equally well pleased with his nurse, for he darted with eagerness at what she offered to him, and, pressing with his little hands the bosom which promised to supply his every want, fixed himself for an hour, without its being possible to move him from his quarters. The nurse wanted to return the same day, but Madame Durand could not bring herself to part so soon from her son, and it was decided that Susan should stay over the christening, and go back the next day.

M. Durand dressed himself in black from head to foot, thinking that in this costume he had very much the appearance of a physician. The relatives invited to the ceremony arrived in due time. First the aunt, Madame Grosbleu, who kissed her niece, and begged her acceptance of a little christening cap, which was trimmed with fine lace, and then attempted to take her little godson, who, so far from meeting her half way, cried and kicked with all his force.

"What a lovely child! he is your very image, my dear Felicité."

She was soon followed by M. and Madame Renard, bonnet-makers in the Rue du Temple, and cousins of M. Durand. M. Renard had intended to show that he was piqued at not having been chosen for godfather; but his wife had made him sensible that there was a certain expense saved, to say nothing of birthdays, Christmas-days, &c., anniversaries on which a godfather was sure to have a visit from his

affectionate godchild. M. Renard admitted that a godson was an indirect tax on one's purse, and dismissing his ill-humour, determined to make himself as agreeable as possible. Then came M. Fourreau and his sister, Mademoiselle Aglaë. He was a saddler of the Rue St. Avoie, and a relation of Madame Durand. He was a man who filled his chair at table most respectably, but who was perfectly ignorant of every thing unconnected with his business. Mademoiselle Aglaë Fourreau was on the verge of her thirtieth year, and had not yet met with an admirer of serious intentions. Naturally very lively, she affected a childish giddiness, which did not become her, for we readily pardon that at eighteen, which is quite unbearable at eight-and-twenty. She spoke in such a mincing tone as to produce a very monotonous effect, and tittered not only at every thing that was said to her, but also when she spoke herself, no matter what the subject might be. In a word, Mademoiselle Aglaë had been rather well looking at eighteen, and would have been generally considered so even now, could she have learnt to laugh a little less.

Two neighbours, one of whom, always ailing and ever taking M. Durand's prescriptions, was one of his best customers, and the other an everlasting domino-player, completed the party who had met together on this auspicious occasion, and joined in the cuckoo-note of "what a beautiful child!" "what a strong fellow!" "what fine eyes!" To each of these exclamations, M. Durand made a profound bow; whilst with a knowing look he said, "I have not done much in this way, but when I set about it in earnest ——!"

M. Endolori, the hypochondriac, whispered the herbalist, "Have you given him an infusion?"

"Who?"

"Your child."

"I wished him to take a decoction of pellitory *Helxine*, a capital thing for the bowels, but the nurse pretended it would be too strong — these women will never hear any thing new. But this morning, whilst my wife was asleep, and the nurse at breakfast, I washed his face all over with elder-water, *sambuceus*, an admirable cosmetic. See how clear the skin looks already."

"Very true, one would think his cheeks were varnished."

Just then Madame Ledoux, in full dress, ran into the room crying out as loud as possible, "What a crowd there is in the room! why you have no brains, to get about a sick person in this way — and then asking her questions when she ought not to speak a word. Well, neighbour, how do you feel? what sort of a night have you had? not got over your fatigue yet I'll engage: and the child — let me see the child — how he smells of elder-water! What has he had anything the matter with his eyes?"

"No," said M. Durand, "it is only a little experiment, a little preventive, that I have used."

"What! Monsieur," said Madame Durand, "have you been washing this little love in elder-water? I never heard of such a thing."

"I assure you, Madame, it is all for his good—I am well acquainted with the virtues of simples."

"Well, sir, do what you please with your simples, but I beg you will leave my son alone."

"I have had fourteen, and never used elder-water with one of them. My husband, the bailiff, made my first drink a little wine, which set him to coughing and almost choaked him. At the birth of my seventh, my husband, the cabinet maker, bathed the child with brandy, as he said, to stretch his joints, and the

poor thing died humpbacked. My thirteenth, by the stationer, was born with very weak eyes. We had cataplasms and I know not what to put to them, and he was blind for life. So much for experiments. But every body seems to be come. What are we waiting for?"

"The godfather, my dear friend."

"Ah, that's true; I forgot the godfather."

"And my cousin, M. Mistigris, the professor of dancing — I should be sorry indeed, if he did not come — such a pleasant man, and so obliging — his kit always at the service of his friends — and he plays country dances so beautifully, with such taste and such style."

"Ah, yes hah, hah, hah! how funny!" said Mademoiselle Aglaë, laughing with all her might.

Madame Ledoux replied, "I think I have heard him play in your shop; he seemed a most capital stick — I thought you had at least four blind fiddlers with you."

"I think the violin is apt to make one nervous," said M. Endolori to M. Durand.

"Yes," replied the herbalist; "but you should take a few pinches of mint *mentha, menthæ*, a fine antispasmodic."

A little man, four feet seven inches high, at most, here entered the room, with the lightness of a zephyr, and placed himself by the bedside in a graceful *mouvement en avant*. In this aërial entrée, it was easy to recognize M. Mistigris, the professor of dancing, who although forty years old, seemed scarcely to touch the ground; his legs were in continual motion — his whole appearance betrayed his profession, and stamped him as a man who thought of nothing but pirouettes.

"We were speaking of you, my dear cousin," said

Madame Durand, holding out her hand to M. Mistigris, who kissed it, while standing on one leg. "I was afraid you were not coming."

"You know I promised to be here at twelve, and here I am. I had some lessons to give which made me rather late. Besides the streets are very dangerous; I saw more than one person upset. Good day, Durand; where is the child?"

"Here," said Madame Moka.

"What do you think of him, cousin?" said Madame Durand.

"Oh, there is no judging of him in that way; let me see his legs."

"Impossible just now; he is dressed for the christening."

"If I saw his legs, I could tell you exactly what sort of a man he will make. You may depend, cousin, it is from the legs alone that you can form a correct opinion. A large or small calf — well or ill turned, — are the unfailing proofs of wit and ability."

"Hah, hah!" said Mademoiselle Aglaë Fourreau; "who ever heard of wit in the calf?"

"Every thing is there, Mademoiselle, even the soul."

"As for the soul, cousin," said the herbalist gravely, "Hippocrates conceives the seat of it to be in the left ventricle of the heart; Erasistratus, in the membrane of the brain; and Strabo between the eyebrows."

"Well, if these gentlemen think the soul dwells in the stomach, in the brain, or between the eyebrows, I think I have just as much right to place it in the calf — every one has his system."

"Again, gentlemen," said Madame Ledoux, at the pitch of her voice, in order to drown the others, "I tell you, you make too much noise, you speak too loud, you will give my neighbour a headache, and

a fever, just as I had with my sixth, the child of the cabinet maker." ——"Ah! here is the godfather."

At this announcement all was quiet; for every one was anxious to know who had been judged worthy of this honour, and to see the presents he had brought. M. Bellequeue presented himself dressed in a blue frock coat, with buttons shining like gold, a white silk waistcoat and black breeches; and it may be well to note that such things as breeches were worn in 1805, the epoch at which the events took place which we have the honour to relate. Bellequeue, whose hair was dressed with more than ordinary care, held his three-cornered hat in his hand, under each arm boxes of comfits, two little parcels tied up with favours, hung by his fingers, and a handsome bouquet was fastened to one of the boxes. The godfather, although a little embarrassed with his load, entered the room with that peculiarly grave air, often affected by those who are fearful of cutting rather a ridiculous figure, and by which none but a fool is deceived. But he soon felt himself at home, and had a smile for every one. Stepping lightly towards the invalid he presented her with four boxes tied with blue favours, and a little parcel containing four pair of gloves. "I knew you would do something, foolish," said Mme. Durand, throwing a soft look on the hairdresser; who drew from his right pocket two little pots of *confiture de Bar*, and presented them, saying, "this is for the stomach."

"What, more! Upon my word I am quite ashamed."

"And this for the chest," said Bellequeue, drawing from his left pocket a pint bottle of Schubac.

"Ah, this is too much."

"Here is your gossip, my dear Bellequeue," said

the herbalist, introducing Mme. Grosbleu, who made a low curtsey. He then begged the godmother's acceptance of four boxes which he had made up his mind to buy as well as a packet of gloves. But whilst Mme. Grosbleu was occupied with her presents, Bellequeue found means to approach Mme. Durand and whispered her, "Hers are Grenoble, but yours are Parisian gloves; your comfits are *à la Vanille*, and you have plenty of pistachio, whilst she has nothing but common nuts."

Mme. Durand replied to all this by a tender look, and a soft squeeze of the hand.

"By the bye, my dear aunt, what is your Christian name?" said she.

"Jane, my dear friend, don't you recollect I was always called Jenny."

"It follows, then," said Bellequeue, "As a matter of course, that our godson's name must be Jean; however, if the mother wishes a second name ——"

"Well, then, let it be Stanislas — that is a very pretty name, Jean Stanislas: — but it must be time to be going."

"The two hackney coaches are at the door," said Catherine.

"I am almost afraid the carriage will make me giddy," said M. Endolori.

"What an interesting ceremony a baptism must be," said Mlle. Aglaë.

"Stay a moment, till I settle the order of your going," said M. Mistigris. "Take the ladies' hands, and mind you keep step."

We shall not follow them to the church. Every body knows what a christening is, and in this one there was nothing particular. At length, after having properly attested that on the 15th of March 1805, a son was born to M. and Madame Durand, united in

holy matrimony, the infant was named Jean Stanislas. But the first name being the easiest to pronounce, was naturally used by the nurse, who never called the child any thing else, and he became accustomed to reply to no other, the more especially as Madame Durand perceived that it flattered the godfather. We shall follow the example of the nurse, and in future call our hero Jean, thinking with M. Bellequeue, that it is as good a name as any other; and as there are such a vast variety of Jeans in the world, some of them must necessarily be very witty, brave, and well behaved. The course of our story will show in what class we must place our Jean.

They regained the coaches. M. Bellequeue's hat never quitted his hand, even in getting in or out of the carriage; and the sound of M. Mistigris's kit gave signal of the return of the party. It was near three o'clock, and the breakfast, or rather dinner, was laid out in the chamber of the invalid, who would by no means consent that the feast should take place in another room. Catherine had out-done herself, and the savoury smell of the first course promised most favourably. Madame Durand had fixed the seats, and not particularly wishing that Bellequeue should sit by Mademoiselle Aglaë, she placed him between the godmother and Madame Renard. Mademoiselle Fourreau had no resource but to laugh with M. Endolori and the domino player, who was as gay as a double six.

During the first course there was nothing to be heard but the rattling of the knives and forks, relieved by the noise of M. Mistigris's feet, who was practising steps under the table all the time he was eating. At the second course they found time to talk, and the conversation became general; and whilst

discussing the herbalist's old Burgundy, they universally agreed as to the beauty of the new born: and the virtuous character he was sure to prove, if he followed the good example set him by his parents. Mademoiselle Aglaë tittered at M. Endolori's soft speeches, which chiefly consisted of recommendations not to eat anchovies, and to be careful of the mushrooms which flavored some of the dishes. As for Bellequeue, he eat and drank almost as much as Madame Moka, who cleared her plate with admirable dexterity. Madame Ledoux eat but little, and continued talking of the children of her three husbands, the bailiff, the cabinet-maker, and the stationer; to all of which M. Renard smiled and listened with an air of the greatest interest. Madame Renard was silent, and busily calculated the probable cost of the dinner. M. Fourreau gorged and drank, and filled again. To the domino-player nothing came amiss. M. Durand impatiently awaited the appearance of a dish of eggs, *à la neige*, into which, whilst Catherine's back was turned, he had thrown an infusion of simples, which according to him, would impart a most excellent flavour. The eggs, *à la neige*, were at length served up. The herbalist said nothing, but smiled when he saw the surprise which the taste excited in his guests, who looked at each other inquiringly.

"I will tell you what it is," said M. Durand, "for I think you will puzzle a long time before you find out. It is a selection of simples exceedingly purifying for the blood, and at the same time particularly aromatic, from which I have distilled an extract, which I secretly mixed with these eggs, in order to give you an agreeable surprise. I am certain that even at court they have never eaten any thing like this. How delicious! is not it?"

The guests looked at each other, and muttering

"Yee-e-s"—"rather strange"—"a very particular taste."

"Oh, I knew what I was about: the more you eat, the better you will like it."

"It's very odd," said Bellequeue, "I cannot get on with it at all."—

"Nor I," said M. Mistigris, throwing an *entrechat* under the table, by which means his left leg came on the right of Madame Renard, who did not know what to make of this, being about the fiftieth she had received since the appearance of the soup. The other guests availed themselves of the example of Bellequeue and left their eggs *à la neige* unfinished, excepting M. Endolori, who hearing that it was a purifier of the blood, sent his plate a second and even a third time; as the herbalist assured him that it was a sure preventive for many maladies.

Fortunately, M. Durand had made no experiments on the dessert, and his *entremets aux simples* was forgotten in drinking the health of the newborn and his parents. The Champagne sparkled in the glasses, and Mademoiselle Aglaë laughed like a fool, because the cork struck Madame Renard on the nose. Bellequeue refilled the glasses.

"What will you do with my godson?" said Madame Grosbleu; "have you already been scheming for him, my dear Felicité."

"I should wish him, above all things, to be a handsome young man, my dear aunt. As to his employment, we shall observe his bent."

"The principal thing is to have him taught early to dance," said M. Mistigris; "that is the way to develope both body and mind."

"Let them make a brave soldier of my godson," said Bellequeue, who had seen service, and always spoke with pleasure of his campaigns—"Eh; that is

the way to push him forwards; he should enter the service at eighteen, and I will bet that before twenty he will be a captain."

"Ah, M. Bellequeue, would you kill my son?"

"No, my dear gossip; but I say the army is the best profession now-a-days."

"I should like my son to be a man of science," said M. Durand. "When he is four or five years old, I shall take him to botanize with me. Once well acquainted with simples, and the business is done."

"Buy a box of dominos for him," said the neighbour, "nothing will so soon teach him to reckon."

M. Endolori had said nothing for some time. He kept twisting about on his chair, became pale, and every now and then made a wry face, as if the *entremets aux simples* did any thing but agree with him.

In the mean time, as they could not make little Jean a he[illegible] nor a man of science, M. Bellequeue proposed a ge[illegible] bumper to his health. M. Endolori filled not, but whispered a few words in the ear of the herbalist.

"A sure proof that it agrees with you."

M. Endolori, not wishing to exhibit these proofs to the company, gave a ghastly look in reply, and hurried out of the room, bent almost double. Nevertheless the gaiety increased. Bellequeue sang, Mistigris capered about the room, and Mademoiselle Aglaë laughed at every thing. Madame Durand at length admitted that she felt a little tired, which was a hint for the breaking up of the party.

The guests made their adieux, and retired through the shop, where M. Mistigris proposed to dance a gavotte with Mademoiselle Fourreau. But as it was very cold, every one preferred returning home. M.

Endolori, who just then re-appeared, and seemed to walk with considerable pain, begged M. Durand to give him his arm as far as his own door. The herbalist saw his neighbour home, assuring him that he would feel all the better the next day, returned to seek repose whilst devising means to give his son a love of botany.

CHAPTER III.

The day succeeding this memorable scene, little Jean, three days old, quitted the paternal roof for that of Susan Jomard, where he found three little comrades, the oldest of whom was barely six, without reckoning the one who had just been weaned. It would seem that, whilst attending to his asses, her husband had not neglected his duties at home.

Madame Durand cried bitterly at parting from her son, though M. Durand took considerable pains to inform her that St. Germains was not in the East Indies, and that, although there was no steam conveyance, there were a thousand other ways of getting there in a very little time. It is hard to convince a mother that she is wrong in crying for her son. Besides, Madame Durand was not in the habit of paying much attention to what her husband said.

Susan, loaded with presents and baby-linen that might have served a little Duke, received from the mother every injunction that maternal tenderness could suggest. Above all things, never to let the child cry, which she promised most faithfully, but

which did not prevent her from letting Monsieur Jean cry the whole of the way home. M. Durand also had a little advice to give the nurse. But his wife insisted that a man had nothing to do with a child, at least until he was weaned. The herbalist admitted there was some truth in this. However, he secretly gave Susan a packet containing flowers of violets, poppies, and mallows, a decoction of which she was to give his son, whenever she perceived him sneeze. All of which was likewise faithfully promised, and the instant she got home she threw the contents to her rabbits, without waiting to see if they sneezed.

You must not suppose from all this that they were unlucky in their choice of a nurse. On the contrary, Susan bestowed every care and attention on the children entrusted to her. She was like the majority of nurses, who think they know how to rear a child as well as the inhabitants of Paris; and who listen very quietly to the directions of the parents, with a firm determination to do only what they themselves conceive to be right.

At the end of three weeks, Madame Durand, perfectly re-established, had recovered her good looks. Although in her thirty-fifth year, the herbalist's wife was a very pleasing little brunette, whose fresh complexion and moderate embonpoint drew many compliments from her customers. Particularly when Bellequeue had arranged her hair, as he had a peculiar tact in harmonizing her head-dress to her features. Madame Durand already wished to go to St. Germains to see her son; but the doctor had forbidden her to go out, it being still the month of April, and the weather very cold. But Madame Durand would have encountered the blasts of Siberia to see her child. Her husband went in search of Belle-

queue to see if he could make his wife listen to reason. Bellequeue accompanied him atonce, and, after saluting the lady in the most gracious manner, gave it as his opinion that it would be extremely imprudent to venture so soon into the country. Besides which, they had heard that the little one was going on well, and was in good health, and that, therefore, it would be very wrong of mamma to make herself ill for love of her son.

Mme. Durand sighed. "Ah! M. Bellequeue, you are not a mother!"

"No, but I am a godfather," replied the hairdresser, "and feel the most tender interest in my godson."

"And I Madame," said the herbalist, "do I go for nothing. It seems however——"

"True, Sir, but you are so cold, — you do not feel the happiness of having a son; you are taken up with your simples. Ah, by this time he must be grown so much, he must be so handsome."

"Perhaps you expect he can talk at three weeks?"

"No, sir, I know very well that he could not talk for you; but for me, how different! A mother can interpret so well every look of her child. Well, as it must be so, I will wait eight days longer; but after that I will listen to no one, and to St. Germains I go."

And, by way of shortening the time which must necessarily elapse before she could see her son she talked of nothing but him from morning till night; and she dilated on his beauty and good temper to all the persons who came to her shop. She never sold an ounce of pearl barley or linseed without saying, "You know it is a boy — a remarkably fine boy — such large eyes, and little dimples in his cheeks, — a perfect little love!"

Many people, completely occupied by their own

maladies or those of their friends, replied to all this, "Madame, must it boil a long time? — must it boil till it thickens? — Is it good for a cold?"

M. Durand, who feared that his wife, completely occupied with his heir, would serve millet for barley, and substitute chickweed for beet, would run to the counter, crying, "My dear Felicité, *festina lente*, don't mistake one thing for another. This is marjoram, *amaracus*—and this is house-leek, *semper vivum* no doubt our son will be a handsome boy — it is very good for cuts — and he will receive, I trust, an excellent education — let this boil five minutes only — but there is no necessity to give Madam an emollient for an astringent, and vice versâ."

At the end of eight days, a slight inflammation of the eyes obliged Madame Durand to postpone her journey. A good-looking woman does not like to go abroad with her eyes under a shade, and the herbalist's wife prided herself with justice on the beauty of her eyes. Besides, Susan wrote, or to speak more correctly, got some one to write every week to the parents of little Jean, to inform them that her nursling grew like a mushroom, and that his beauty and repartees were the admiration of the country. It is probable that the repartees were in pantomime, inasmuch, as a child six weeks old does not generally reply *ad rem*. But if we take, *au pied de la lettre*, every thing that nurses tell us, we must believe that children fifteen months old are often able to take a part in a glee, or a hand at piquet.

At length the inflammation went off, and Madame Durand was in excellent health. There was nothing to prevent her from going to see her son, who had now been at St. Germaine's nearly two months. The day was fixed, and it was determined not to apprise Susan of the intended visit, for people are always glad to

take a nurse by surprise. It was a beautiful morning in the month of May. Madame Durand's toilet partook of the fine lady and the Amazon. She took leave of her spouse, who did not accompany her, because they could not both be absent from the shop; but M. Bellequeue, himself delighted at the thought of seeing his godson, had offered his services as her attendant.

Mamma became impatient, for nine o'clock had passed, and they ought to have been at the coach. M. Durand begged her to take care of cold, and gave her a box of jujubes for his son. At last Bellequeue arrived hat in hand. The herbalist intrusted his wife to his protection, and Bellequeue swore that he would take as much care of her as though she were his own, and flourished his cane as if he were ready to fight in her cause.

Madame Durand took the arm of the hair-dresser, and they began their journey, saying to each other, "How delightful is an excursion in the country — to see little Jean, and breathe the fresh air. — We shall pass a charming day."

They soon arrived at the stand. In 1805, the omnibuses, (M. Durand would have said *omnibi*,) and other conveyances now so common, were unknown. Our friends were content with an humble *coucou*, into which they were half forced by the driver, who assured them that he was full, and just on the point of starting. On getting in, however, they found only two passengers, a young man and a servant-girl, who were whispering together, and seemed by no means pleased with this addition to the company. The young man pressed close to his companion in order to make room for Mme. Durand; as the coachman called out, in a stentorian voice, that each seat held

three, and that if one of them was a child, he should make it hold four.

Mme. Durand sunk into the seat ; but as she was something larger than a child, the girl was forced to half sit on the young man's knees, who, however, made no complaint. The wooden-bar which served as a back to the second seat, was then let down, and Bellequeue placed himself in front of Mme. Durand who cried, "Well, let us be off—why don't we start."

"Come, coachee, get on," said Bellequeue. But the coachman was again down to look out for passengers in order to fill his coach, which was always on the point of starting. Five minutes had elapsed, and no signs of the coachman.

Mme. Durand kept exclaiming, "Dear me, how provoking ! we shall be so late : I shall scarcely see my child."

"Is this fellow humbugging us ?" said Bellequeue, putting his head out of the window.

"Had you been kept long, sir," said Mme. Durand to her neighbour.

"Egad, Madame, at least half-an-hour," said the young man smiling.

"Half-an-hour, oh ! that is too bad ; let us get out, my dear Bellequeue."

"Stay, stay, here he is," and as he spoke, the coachman came up hauling along a young man, whom he had just torn from one of his comrades, and whom he almost threw into the coach, saying, "Did not I tell you I was full and just going off ?"

The young man, whose accent and dress at once betrayed the Englishman, stared about him with lacklustre eyes, as if not exactly knowing how he got there, and seemed not a little annoyed that he had lost half

his cravat in the struggle that had taken place between the two coachmen.

Bellequeue said, "Come, I suppose we shall get off now."

"To be sure, to be sure, honest man."

"*Dites donc*, coachman," said the young Englishman, putting his hat on, "*vous avez pas dit le prix à moi?*"

"'Tis all the same, Milord, we never have but one price; you may safely trust me." So saying, the coachman jumped off his seat to catch a nurse, whom he saw surrounded by several of his comrades, whilst Bellequeue half suffocated with rage, cried, "We insist on starting immediately."

"*Monsieur*," said the Englishman, addressing Bellequeue, "*voulez vous bien dire à moi combien coutait la meme chose?*"

Bellequeue looked at the Englishman, then scratched his head, and turning to Mme. Durand, he said, "I don't exactly understand what he means."

"*Je demandais à vous combien la meme chose que le* coachman *voulait faire payer.*"

"Ah, I take, you want to know the fare."

"Yes."

"Twenty sous is the regular fare; but if you don't make a bargain they make you pay twenty-five."

"*Est ce que c'etait le usage ici que les* coachman *emportaient les voyageurs de force dans leur voiture?*"

"What did he force you in?"

"Yes; *il avait disputé moi à un autre qui me avait saisi par le cravate, en disant toujours que je serais bien content de son petite cheval; heureusement que le cravate avait déchiré sans quoi il étranglait moi quand celui-ci me emportait.*"

"They have certainly a very *taking* way," said Bellequeue.

"We are not moving a step," said Mme. Durand. It's past ten o'clock, I have lost all patience. Let us get out."

"I'll cane this rascal," said Bellequeue, brandishing his stick out of the window. He was just stepping out of the coach, when the driver came up, dragging the nurse in triumph, and to whom, when seated comfortably between Bellequeue and the Englishman, he handed her baby, saying, "We shall be off now; we shall be beyond the barrier in less than no time."

"I'll tell you what, coachman," said Bellequeue, very angrily, "if you do not start at once ——"

"Gently, gently, my good man; don't you see we are the same thing as full."

At length he mounted his box; but instead of driving off, kept turning from side to side, crying as loud as he could bawl, "A rabbit! a rabbit for St. Germains!"

"*Qu 'est ce que il avait donc à appeler ainsi des lapins?*" said the Englishman to the nurse; who replied,

"Well, why should not he — to be sure he'll get a load if he can."

The Englishman stared, but held his tongue. Madame Durand, who had been looking at the child, whispered Bellequeue, "How different from my son!"

"As unlike as a Titus and a tail," said Bellequeue.

The young people in the corner took no notice of any thing, being entirely occupied with themselves. Bellequeue, seeing that they did not move, was going to collar the coachman, when an ill-dressed little man, with a bundle in a red pocket handkerchief under his arm, jumped up on the bar by the side of the driver, after having bowed very respectfully to the inside passengers. The coachman whipt his horses,

which went off at a footpace, still bawling, "One rabbit for St. Germain; only one rabbit and then we are full."

"How now! you vagabond," said Bellequeue, "are you going to take any more?"

"Why not?" said he, "you would have me starve?"

"You actually mean then that your horse shall draw nine people?"

"Nine—that's the lowest number; we often have twelve."

"Why we shan't get to St. Germain this morning."

"Wait—you'll see—the heavier my load, the faster my horse will go. A rabbit!"

Fortunately a country woman soon filled the vacant seat, and he whipped his horse in earnest. The *coucou* rolled merrily forwards to St. Germain. Mme. Durand smiled, and said, "How lucky." Her two neighbours smiled also, but said nothing; whilst the nurse, turning to the Englishman, said, "You see he has found his two rabbits." But he, thinking she made fun of him, sat sulkily silent.

The last rabbit, the countrywoman, and the nurse conversed with the coachman. Bellequeue ogled in turn the servant girl and Madame Durand. The little man, who was the first rabbit, untied his red pocket handkerchief and produced a most miserable pair of breeches on which he had been at work, for the little man was a tailor, and as he was carrying them home to a customer at St. Germain, he calculated on finishing them *en route*. He also produced a snuff-box, which he often presented to all in the carriage; but in stretching out his arm to offer it to Madame Durand, a violent jolt upset the box, and the snuff flew into the eyes of the Englishman, who was anything but pleased at the event, and as soon as he was able to see, seized the unfortunate tailor by the collar

and insisted on his boxing with him. Bellequeue endeavoured to re-establish peace, whilst the coachman roared in the ears of the Englishman, "Do you mean to kill me a rabbit? Are you mad, milord?"

At length things were explained; every body was sneezing, for the carriage resembled a snuff shop, and they reached Nanterre reciprocating "God bless you!"

The carriage stopped—the coachman jumped down and held out his hand to the countrywoman. The little tailor disappeared with his breeches round a corner, thinking, perhaps, that the Englishman would renew his invitation to a party of fistycuffs. They were soon surrounded by the venders of the cakes for which Nanterre is so celebrated. "Let us alight," said Bellequeue to Madame Durand, who was not well pleased at the stoppage. The unfortunate horse had need, however, of a little breathing time. The young people in the corner got out also, but instead of entering the inn, and partaking of cakes and ratafia with the others, they slipped quietly into a field and followed a footpath which ran by the side of the road. Madame Durand ate a few cakes by way of passing the time. Bellequeue cast a hasty glance in the only glass which adorned the room, and seeing that his hair had suffered little by the journey, devoted all his cares to his companion.

The half hour, which seemed a day, at length elapsed, and the coachman came to announce that all was ready. Madame Durand was one of the first to get into the carriage; the nurse next, and then the Englishman came, who held on his knees a dozen and a half of the Nanterre cakes. The little tailor reappeared stitching on a button; the wretch smelt of onions enough to preserve a whole city from the plague. The countrywoman got up, and the party was complete with the exception of the two young

people in the corner, for whom the coachman began whistling, as if to his horse, crying, "Where the devil can they be hid? They were not in the inn."

"They took a walk in the fields," said Bellequeue, with a knowing look.

"Of course they go no farther," said Madame Durand, who was dying to get on. Just then the young people appeared. They jumped in to the carriage, seemingly in very high spirits.

Madame Durand observed that the girl's dress was a little rumpled, and the gentleman's ears extremely red.

Bellequeue pinched her knees gently, saying "How absurd to keep us in this way! Politeness should never be forgotten on any account."

The remainder of the journey was pleasant enough, except that the smell of the onions superseded that of the snuff. When they arrived at the foot of the hill on which the town stands, several of the passengers alighted, as the horse, which was quite equal to a load of twelve people, could not now be expected to draw so well with only nine. The young man and his companion settled with the driver, and took one of the least frequented pathways — seclusion was all that was necessary to make a road pleasant to them: a fact which we have all experienced in our time.

Madame Durand and her son now breathed the same air. She seized on Bellequeue's arm, who would fain have picked his steps, for the pavement of St. Germain is not so good as in Paris, — but she hurried him on towards Susan's house, which they had no little difficulty in finding. At length, over a gateway on the Poissy road, they read, — "Jomard — Asses to let." Here Madame Durand quitted Bellequeue's arm, and opening the door, she saw four children

rolling on a dung heap, surrounded by ducks and fowls, and squabbling for a piece of bread, the colour of which it was impossible to tell. Bellequeue followed her on tiptoe as well he might. He examined the four children, the youngest of whom was about sixteen months old, and quite equal to play with his brothers.

"He is not amongst these," said Bellequeue.

"Oh, no; they are much too old. Susan, Mme. Jomard!—Susan, bring me my son—my dear Stanislas."

"Our pretty little Jean," said Bellequeue.

The nurse appeared at the door in an undress, which, to say the least, was not very becoming. "If here is not Monseiur and Madame!" hastily untying an apron none of the cleanest. How you have surprised me," said she.

"And my son—bring in my dear son."

"Oh, wait a moment; he is in his cradle, you will see how well he looks."

Mme. Durand followed Susan into the room. Her son's cradle stood by a large bed, in which the whole of the Jomard family slept; the parents at the head, the children at the foot.

Little Jean was asleep. Susan took him up and put him in his mother's arms, who covered him with kisses, and was delighted to see that he seemed quite well.

"His cap is rather dirty," said Mamma.

"I assure Madame, it was as white as snow this morning, but there is no keeping any thing clean for a moment.—But let his papa kiss him."

"Oh my husband could not come to-day; this is his godfather."

"Ah, I was sure I had seen the gentleman before."

Mme. Durand held the child up to Bellequeue, saying, "how well he looks!"

Bellequeue stooped down to kiss his godson, who, not well pleased at having been awoke, twisted his little fingers in the well powdered curls of his godfather. "What a fine child;" said Bellequeue, trying to rescue his endangered locks.

"I think there is a look of me," said Mme. Durand, walking towards the garden, which Susan pointed out to her.

While she gave way to all the tenderness of maternal love, the nurse took Bellequeue to see her own children, and to expatiate on their several perfections. She held up to him the youngest of sixteen months, who immediately slapped his cheeks with hands covered with dirt and God knows what. Another was behind Bellequeue, pricking the calf of his legs. A third made off with his three-cornered hat, which he first put on his head, and then threw up into a hayloft; whilst the eldest jumped on the beau's back, and began playing the drum with his queue. The poor godfather was at his wits' end; there was no managing four children at once.

"Take care — my hat — my queue! Stop, you funny little rogues, you will tear my coat. Mme. Jomard, for goodness' sake keep your children quiet."

Susan was almost bursting with laughter, at the little innocent gaieties of her children, and Mme. Durand, who had just joined them, could not help accompanying her, when she saw the miserable plight in which poor Bellequeue was. They had torn off the ribbon which tied his queue, and his hair hung loose about his shoulders and was blown over his face, which was covered with dirt from the children's hands.

"Why, Bellequeue, you look like a wild man of the woods," said Mme. Durand. The perruquier, who wished with all his heart, that the children had thought so before they came near him, chucked one of the dear little ones on a heap of straw, and Susan, seizing on a whip, which she used indifferently for the asses and her children, soon made them scamper away.

"You will dine with us, Madame," said the nurse. "Oh, I wish I had known you were coming — but we will give you the best we have."

"Any thing will be welcome, my dear Susan, so that it is in the company of my dear child."

Bellequeue, who began to have enough of the Jomard family, would have preferred dining at some *traiteur's* in the town, and proposed doing so to Mme. Durand, but she determined on staying where she was.

"A little bread and milk, and my child are all that I want:" and the poor godfather was compelled to conform to circumstances.

Whilst Susan was getting the dinner ready, and regretting the absence of her husband, who would not have the pleasure of seeing Jean's relatives, Bellequeue, after a long search, had discovered a piece of a broken looking-glass, before which, with the help of a little comb, which he always carried about him, he endeavoured to repair the disorder of his hair. Whilst he was washing his face, Mme. Durand, put a piece of barley-sugar into his mouth which her son had just been sucking, saying, "Dood! dood! he was so delighted sucking it — the little love."

"Very nice," said Bellequeue, wiping his mouth, and having searched in vain for some powder, he determined to shake a little flour on his disordered locks.

"Here is the dinner," said Susan. "Sit down,

Madame, and I hope you will excuse anything wanting. You are heartily welcome."

They sat down. Bellequeue found but one chair boasting four legs. His four little play fellows sat next him and Susan opposite. Mme. Durand would not permit her son to quit her arms. Some soup came first, in which a spoon might have stood upright; the children soon dispatched their allowance and held their plates for more.

"You will choke them," said Bellequeue.

"Oh, no, sir, it is good for them; see how strong they are." The eldest, to show his strength, tried to pull the chair from under his brother, who fell on Bellequeue, and sent a spoonful of soup over his waistcoat. The godfather lost all patience, and cried to Mme. Jomard, "Stop your little vagabonds." But Susan had gone to fetch a dish of pigeons, on which she had bestowed the greatest pains, and Bellequeue, after wiping his waistcoat, sat down to table, and helped Mme. Durand, who had been amusing herself by making her son suck some onions, which she then gave to Bellequeue, saying, "Here, eat them, your godson has tasted them and made them all the better."

To judge by the godfather's look, he was not exactly of that way of thinking. He swallowed the onions with a slight grimace, doing his utmost to keep clear of his little neighbours, who every now and then pounced their forks on his plate.

"Mme. Jomard," said Bellequeue, "I think it would be well if you taught your children not to meddle with the plate that is not before them."

"Bah, they are only in play; it is all by way of joke."

"Nothing more," said Mme. Durand.

"Oh, joke as much as you please, but there's

the second wing that little rascal has taken off my plate."

"Susan brought an *omelette au lard*, which formed the dessert. At the sight of this dish, the young ones set up a cry of joy, and each held out his plate.

"Be quiet," said Susan; and, as the children were fighting who should be helped first, one of the plates was upset on Bellequeue's knees.

The dinner was at last finished, and Bellequeue slowly drew his watch, saying, "We must not forget that we are a good distance from Paris. You have not been out before, and it will not do to be late. It is already five, and we must be moving, my dear gossip; it will be at least eight before we reach Paris."

"What, go already!" said Mme. Durand; "must I so soon quit my little jewel? How hard! but I will soon return. Mind, nurse, I shall often come to see him."

"Yes, Madame, and you will always find him well taken care of. Here, children, kiss the good lady, who has given me something to buy toys for you."

Bellequeue felt that this was a hint to him, and drew his purse and gave something also for the little wags, who had so much amused him. The little devils ran after him to kiss him, and he was horrified at the thought of another attack on his neckcloth and tail. So, hastily kissing his godson, and dodging the little Jomards, he slipped into the court-yard, picked his way through the ducks and fowls, and gained the door of the street, where he stood calling Mme. Durand, who at length tore herself from her child, throwing many a look behind.

"That Susan is a most excellent woman; and what a well conducted family those Jomards are," said Mme. Durand to her companion.

"Yes, extremely so," replied Bellequeue, hurrying

lest the mamma should take it into her head to ke one more kiss of her son.

They reached the coach-stand. Mme. Durand otested against entering any that was not nearly ll. They found one in which there was only one side place vacant.

"Do you get in," said Bellequeue, "and I will t with the coachman; at least we shall get off the uicker."

Mme. Durand got in. Bellequeue made himself rabbit, and off they went. Every thing promised favourably for their safe arrival, when, just as they neared the barrier, the horse came to a dead stop, and Bellequeue, not being prepared for any thing of the kind, was thrown forward and rolled in the mud. Fortunately, he escaped with a few bruises on the head, which would not have happened, Mme. Durand said, if he wore his hat like other people. With some difficulty the horse was got on, and at last brought them to their destination.

Mme. Durand leant on her companion, who limped a little, and reached her home, saying, "Well, my dear Bellequeue, what an extremely pleasant day we have passed."

"Oh, extremely agreeable indeed," said Bellequeue, leaning heavily on his cane.

"This shall not be our last trip, my friend; we will often go and see that good-natured Susan," to which Bellequeue made no reply, but contented himself with wishing Mme. Durand "Good night."

CHAPTER IV.

We do not dwell on the several changes in the child, nor record each tooth that he cut: we do not even accompany Mme. Durand in her visits to the nurse, nor, indeed, did our friend Bellequeue;—one happy day with the Jomard family had been enough for him.

Little Jean, when eighteen months old, could walk alone. Honest Jomard had taught him one or two imprecations, which he delivered with great effect; he made stout fight with his foster-brothers; he flung his bread or cake in the face of every stranger who tried to coax him, and, in a word, was in rude health and spirits. There was nothing more to be got by leaving him with his nurse, and it was decided that he should return to the paternal hearth.

M. Durand, who had not seen his son since the day of his birth, found him very much altered. He took him on his knees, which the child resisted as well as he was able, and put a piece of gum arabic into his mouth, which Jean spit out in his face. The herbalist then set him down, declaring that he was as fierce

as a Turk, and that he would take measures to make him more amenable.

Mme. Durand said that she would take care of all that. Besides, it was proper that a man should have a degree of firmness, and her son promised to be every thing that she could wish. To be sure he could yet say but very few words, and those not the best chosen. All the family came to see and admire little Jean, who was by no means ill-looking, especially when he would look at strangers without making faces or putting out his tongue. Mme. Ledoux saw a great likeness to her fifth, a child of the bailiff. M. Renard admired his nose. Mme. Grosbleu kissed him, and bedewed him with her tears. Mdlle. Aglaë laughed; and M. Mistigris, feeling the calf of his leg, swore that he would make something of him, and that Alcibiades himself had not a finer instep.

"It would be odd," said Catherine, "if a child that was born in the presence of a file of grenadiers, who drank to his health, was not out of the common run."

Bellequeue often came to see his godson now that he had left the nurse, and said, "I see that he will be a fine fellow, a wild dog, like his godfather."

At first every thing went off well. The noise and crying of the child were excused, because he was yet too young to know what he was doing. When he swore, they laughed. Bellequeue was delighted when his godson called him a rascal, and Mme. Durand could scarce contain herself when Jean filliped the nose of his honoured father. They shewed the wonderful child to every one that came to the shop. Little Jean put his fingers in the eyes of those who wished to kiss him, or pulled the nose of those who took him in their arms, but they all left the shop saying that he certainly was a very interesting child.

In this way Jean reached his sixth year, thinking of little but eating, drinking, sleeping and swearing.

Certainly he had not lost much time as yet, and, in the midst of all his wildness, it was easy to see that he had an affectionate disposition. He had been known to give his own dinner to a poor man; and, on another occasion, had cried nearly the whole day, because, in playing with a penknife, he had accidentally cut the finger of one of his little friends. There was nothing radically wrong about him, and his repartees and tricks showed any thing but a want of cleverness. Much, therefore, might be made of him; but he required a firm hand, and, above all, that actions which demanded reprimand or correction should not be eulogized as proofs of quickness and spirit.

At six years old M. Durand had undertaken the education of his son, that is to say, to teach him to botanize, and to distinguish the different kinds of seeds that were in his shop. Little Jean preferred fencing with his godfather, Bellequeue, to learning botany. Mme. Durand thought that, before teaching him simples, it would be as well to teach him his letters. But M. Durand was inflexible on this head. He seated his son opposite to him on the counter, and began his lecture.

Little Jean cried at the sight of the camomiles and poppies. His papa gave him a slight slap, and, showing him some patience-root, tried several times to make him repeat its name after him. Jean threw the patience in his father's face, who then determined to administer a little scholastic flagellation; and said very gravely to his son, "take off your trowsers, sir."

The child, thinking that it was merely with a view to put on some other dress, quickly took off his little

trowsers, and came dancing before his father with his shirt flying in the wind. M. Durand caught hold of him, and very cooly gave him half a dozen slaps, saying, "This is to teach you patience—*Lapathum;* this, that you may say after me camomile, *anthemis*; and this purslain, *portulaca*,—you shall have a slap for each: and thus, my dear son, you will learn botany *per fas et nefas*.

Little Jean, obliged to take a course of botany, *nefas*, roared lustily, and his mother, thinking some accident had happened, was much surprised at the method by which M. Durand was beating learning into her son. She snatched the child from him, calling him barbarian and tyrant.

Fortunately M. Bellequeue came in; he was very necessary in re-establishing the peace which his godson so often destroyed. He would listen quietly to both parties, and allow that each was right; by far the best plan for composing quarrels. As it seemed that Jean was not yet up to botany, he proposed his being sent to school, where he perhaps might learn something else. M. Bellequeue's advice was taken. It was determined that Jean should go to school in the morning and return at five in the evening. Madame Durand fixed on the school nearest her house, and after giving her son into the charge of the master, in pretty much the same terms that she had formerly committed him to the care of Susan Jomard, the next morning led him to school with a basket of provisions in his hand, and a large slate hung at his side.

Jean was pleased with his school; he was delighted to find so many little boys of his own age with whom he could play so many new games. At first, his lessons did not annoy him; he had great quickness in learning, and could get in a quarter of an hour, as

much as others took the half day in committing to memory. But his liveliness, his giddiness, and his long habit of doing only what pleased himself, soon made him neglect his grammar, and he was occupied only by the tricks which he played his comrades. Every day he invented something new, which threw the class into disorder. He hid the exercises of one, spilt the ink of another, changed the baskets, broke the slates, and went so far as to tear out the tongue from the master's bell.

As Madame Durand was liberal in her presents to the master, he overlooked every thing Jean did, and contented himself with saying to the mother, "He is giddy-headed, but time will correct that. There is a good deal in him. To be sure, as yet he does not show much; but never mind, there is a good deal in him.

Madame Durand kissed her son, handed him a pot of jam, or a cake, and retuned to her house, saying, "The master says, that there is a great deal in our son."

"Why, he can no more write than a cat, and does not know how to read two sentences."

"Never mind, Sir, he has it in him, that is enough." And even when Jean often returned with his clothes torn, his hat lost, and his face scratched, and M. Durand would say, "How came you in such a pickle, Sir?"

"Oh papa, I was playing."

"How did you tear your coat?"

"Playing."

"And your cap, have you lost it?"

"Yes, playing."

"My friend you must not scold him, as 'twas all in play. You would not have him kill himself over

his books and themes. Amuse yourself, my child. Happy age ! 'twill pass only too quick."

Jean kissed his mother, and ran over to his godfather, who taught him to parry carte and parry tierce and would at any time cheerfully play battledore and shuttlecock with his favourite. He told him that a man always knew enough if he could fence well, and that he was fit company for any one, provided his hair was well drest and his carriage good. Jean found all this delightful, and preferred the society of Bellequeue to that of his father, who was always talking of his simples, and never approached his son but with a packet of roots in his hand.

Jean was not the only scamp in his class. There was also a boy named Démar, an impudent liar and a thief; and one Gervais, who was extremely lazy, a glutton and a coward.

These young gentlemen were soon intimate with Jean, who, notwithstanding all his tricks, was frank and honest. He would always take a beating himself, rather than throw it on the back of another. If the author of any fault were unknown, Jean would say without hesitating, " It is I who did it," if he feared, one of his play fellows would be accused. It was not thus with Démar, who was a year older than Jean. Treated with great severity by his parents, this boy had contracted a habit of lying, and would endeavour to shift on his fellows the punishment that he had deserved. When Jean reproached him with his falsehood, Démar, who did not want for wit, would turn it off with a joke, or would introduce some new game. Jean bore no malice, and soon became reconciled to his friend. Gervais, who was a great glutton, used to visit Jean's basket and appropriate a part of his breakfast. Jean was angry at first, but Gervais would submit to a threshing without returning a blow;

so he was compelled to look this over, and Gervais knowing his courage, implored his protection whenever he quarreled with his comrades.

These young gentlemen agreed very well in one point, which was a mutual dislike to their lessons. They left school together, but instead of returning home, they used to blackguard about the streets. Jean invented tricks to annoy passengers. He would upset an apple-woman's barrow in the middle of the street, and would dip his hand in the mud and pull a gentleman by the coat with his dirty fingers. In the dark nights, he would attach a string loosely to the knockers of separate doors, then rapping at one, he would run away. One door being opened, and the string tightened, would, of course, raise the rapper of the other, and so alternately, to the astonishment of the porters and the great amusement of Jean and his vagabond companions. Démar was not content with these innocent amusements, but pilfered nuts and apples which he devoured in secret ; and Gervias pocketed every halfpenny of money he could steal from Jean.

Jean was growing up apace, but was not the more easily managed. He could read and write tolerably well, and that was all. As for latin, history, and geography, he loathed their very names. His godfather very often found him on the Place Royale playing at pitch and toss, instead of being at school.

Bellequeue was now in advanced life, and no longer tripped along so lightly as hitherto, but was as great a coxcomb as ever, and just as careful of his hair. Finding himself in easy circumstances, he had for some time left off business, and no longer dressed any but a few particular friends. As he grew older he became more and more attached to his godson.

Jean promised to be tall ; he had sparkling eyes,

beautiful brown hair, a good forehead, and an open face; although he took little pains to look his best.

Bellequeue would pass his hand through his hair and say, "Yes you will do, you will be a fine fellow. Ah, if your mother had let your hair grow long, you might have had a queue like mine. She talks of its being no longer the fashion. I have no patience with the revolution which destroyed the queues and *boucles à la chancelière*, and the *ninons* of the women."

To which Jean would reply, "Surely my dear godfather, I may be a man like you without knowing all about the Romans and Greeks, and *musa*, a muse, and *rosa*, a rose, and stuff my head with the volcanoes of Italy and Ireland."

"Why certainly," replied Bellequeue, "I never gave up much time to those things, and yet I have got through the world pretty well. I know that you are not to be a hairdresser, that you will be independent, and they wish to make a man of science of you. Hold up your head my boy; it is equally true that if you become a physician or a barrister, a very little geography will do, I should think."

"But, godfather, I don't want to be any thing at all."

"Why then, my boy, I think you know quite enough, provided you mind your guard, and are up to two or three little things that I will teach you, so that you may defend the fair sex whenever there is occasion. But above all you must be polite, gallant, and attentive to the ladies. Every thing else will come naturally enough in time."

Mme. Durand differed very little from Bellequeue. Her son promised to be handsome and well made, what more could she want?

The herbalist was of a very different way of think-

ing. He saw Jean as he really was—a wrong-headed idler, who was ruining himself by bad company.

M. Durand made one more attempt to instil a knowledge of simples into his son; but after Jean had been half an hour in the shop, it was impossible to know it again. The herbs were all mixed, the flowers where the roots ought to be, and the dried plants torn from their stalks. It took eight days to repair the disorder.

The good old gentleman tried other means. He took his son into the country with him to botanize. But instead of searching for plants, Jean climbed the trees, and ran after butterflies; and M. Durand having essayed to re-commence the lesson *per nefas*, his son, who was now twelve years old, took to his heels and returned alone to the house.

"Decidedly," said M. Durand, "this boy is fit for nothing. We must employ severe measures. He can't recollect a root of guimauve, and always mistakes thyme for wild thyme. I have no hope of him."

"You hate your son, sir," said Mme. Durand, "you are always finding fault, — the dear boy, with eyes like diamonds, and such teeth. He will be very tall; I will engage he will be full five feet eight: you ought to be proud, sir, of having such a son."

Bellequeue, also pointing one of his toes, or settling a curl, would say, "I am certain he will do. I know very well he is not one of your bookworms, but he fences well, and has a remarkably quick eye. You'll see, he will be a brave fellow."

CHAPTER V.

JEAN was thirteen years old, when it was decided he should leave school. He read tolerably well, and you might almost decipher his writing.

Mme. Durand asserted that her son had completed his education, as far as essentials were concerned, and that he now only required that polish which good society would confer.

M. Durand, who could conceive nothing more delightful for a man than to know exactly how much bran or linseed to put in a poultice, naturally looked on his son as the heir of his knowledge as well as his fortune. But Jean protested so strongly against ever being an herbalist, that he was obliged to give up the long-cherished hope of ever seeing in his son a second self.

Mme. Durand had now attained her forty-eighth year, and was completely wrapped up in her son, whose appearance was extremely good. The mother, who thinks no longer of her own good looks, cares more for her children; she is proud of their beauty, and has generally an overweening opinion of their

abilities. There was not much room, however, for exaggerating Jean's, who only excelled at shuttlecock and billiards. But in rattling about, Jean very often sung, and it was easily seen that he had naturally a very good voice.

Mme. Durand was by no means the last to make this discovery. She said, "My son would cut a figure at the opera, if I let him go on the stage. Have you ever heard him sing? Such a beautiful voice! He was humming this morning. '*Le bon roi Dagobert a mis sa culotte à l'envers.*' I really fancied myself at the *Bouffes.*"

Of course, Jean was to be taught to sing, and as it was high time that he should join in a quadrille, M. Mistigris had due notice that the sooner he converted him into a zephyr the better.

M. Mistigris, who did not want a day of fifty years, had become extremely grey, but he said that age only rendered him lighter, and that every year he felt himself more equal to his business.

M. Mistigris had long wished to give lessons to his little cousin. He went to the house with his kit in his pocket, and was in ecstacies at the sight of Jean's legs. He desired him to point his toe, which he did, full in the face of Mistigris. When he asked him to bend his limbs, he fell flat on the ground. The professor, however was delighted with his pupil, and declared that he would soon dance as well as himself. The music-master said much the same, being well paid for the lessons *he did not give*, and Jean had a five-franc piece given him for his assiduous attentions to his master's instructions.

Jean ran to spend his five francs with his friends, Démar and Gervais. On leaving school, he had not lost sight of his two comrades, who lived in the same quarter with himself. Whenever he could escape

from home he always ran to join these worthies, who were sure to be found idling with other blackguards of their age. Jean was always welcome, for he was seldom without money; his mother and godfather not wishing that he should deny himself those little indulgencies suitable to his age. But Jean was no glutton, and his money was freely shared with his companions, who swore an eternal friendship for him, and at fourteen such oaths go a great way.

There are some equally credulous in after life which speaks well for them, for an honest man is seldom a suspicious one.

Démar never had a farthing. His parents were much discontented with him, and would not give him the means of supplying his vices.

The parents of Gervais were very poor, and he was equally pennyless. The arrival of such a prize as Jean was of course hailed with rapture. Démar said to his friend, "How happy you are; you can do what you please. If we were all three of us rich we might travel together; how delightful that would be."

"Certainly," said Gervais, "we might do what we liked from morning till night. No lessons, no work. We might go any where, and no more bread and water at night by way of punishment."

"And I," cried Jean, "should have done with music and dancing—such stuff! as if I had not had enough of masters in my time. I will play them some trick that shall settle them. Besides, my godfather says that I fence very well, and am very upright. What the devil do they want more?"

"Stay, Jean," replied Démar, who appeared lost in thought, "if I were in your place I would ask a small sum of money from my godfather. You are his favourite, and he would not refuse you. With that we might all three of us amuse ourselves in the envi-

rons of Paris. We should find a thousand prettier places than this to play in."

Jean made no reply; he liked very well to be idle with his friends, but he had no idea of absenting himself from home for any length of time. Thoughtless as he was, Jean really loved his parents, particularly his mother, who was ever showing how much she doated on him. He, therefore, soon forgot Démar's proposal.

The music-master, who had an eye to his pocket, was very punctual in calling; but his pupil was extremely remiss. He would not *sol fa*, he whistled when his master gave him the *la*, and when the violin was placed in his hands, he let it drop on the ground. These little amiabilities at length tired out the patience of the master; after four months' lessons, Jean had not learnt to play even the airs of the *Bossus*. The professor declared to M. and Mme. Durand, that their son would pay attention to nothing, and that he would never be master of music.

"I expected as much," said the herbalist; "when he could not learn to make even a bath of emollient herbs, how could you possibly expect him to learn music. *Emollit mores.*"

"That man does not know what he is talking about," said Mme. Durand, "he is evidently a bad master. We will try another. My son not learn!—don't you hear how well he sings?"

M. Mistigris was not much more fortunate with our hero, who amused himself at the expense of his cousin, the dancer. He got him to execute each step several times, saying, that he could learn much better in that way. The old dancing-master did not wait to be asked twice. He sank, jumped, and pirouetted, before his pupil, who, seated quietly in an arm chair, was delighted to see M. Mistigris perspiring at every

pore. Jean appeared wrapped in admiration, and cried, "bravo!" whenever the professor jumped higher than usual. The lesson almost always passed in this way. Jean looked on whilst M. Mistigris danced, so that one would have thought the latter was taking lessons from Jean.

This way of teaching, however, did not render the pupil's muscles very pliable, and M. Mistigris danced for several months before Jean, and yet his toes turned in as much as ever.

The professor at last thought of another way of giving his pupil a love for dancing. M. Mistigris, according to the custom of many of his colleagues, assembled his pupils at his house once a week, and, although, he lodged on the the third floor of a house in the Rue des Gravilliers, he represented himself as giving *bals Champêtres*, equal to those of *La Chaumière* or *Wauxhall*. So Mistigris, one day said to Mme. Durand, "My dear cousin, as my pupil, your son, is not yet perfectly acquainted with the figures, I think it would not be amiss if he were to come sometimes to my little balls; he would there meet pupils of both sexes, who are father advanced, and he could not fail to acquire a taste for those beautiful positions, and an attention to time, without which a young man cannot possibly tell how the world goes."

"You are quite right," said Mme. Durand, "and my son shall certainly go to your balls."

"The day after to-morrow; you will do me the kindness to accompany him; you will meet a charming party. Young men who jump to the ceiling, and young ladies who point a foot level with my shoulder."

"I shall have very great pleasure."

"You know the number? but you will hear the music below."

"At what hour, pray?"

"Oh, as early as you please. As soon as two arrive, I form a set. I may reckon on you and your friends, if you please."

Mme. Durand told her son that she meant to take him to a ball. As Jean had never been present at one, he did not know whether he should like it or not.

M. Durand not being tempted to exchange his shop for a ball room, Bellequeue was pressed into their service, very much to his satisfaction, as he was a great amateur of the dance. The day of the *réunion* having arrived, Madame Durand took care that her son should be extremely well dressed, who, however, felt more at home in his every day clothes. But there was no escaping: Madame Durand never lost sight of him. She every now and then tapped him on the cheek, calling him "wicked rogue;" but with a smile which rather said, "what a dear you are."

Bellequeue did not keep them waiting. He was dressed with more than usual care, and perfumed the air with vanille and jasmin. His hair was powdered more bountifully than common, to hide a tint of grey which began to appear. As usual he held his three-cornered hat in one hand, and in the other a pair of kid gloves, which were quite new. He presented his arm to Madame Durand, and seemed to have renewed all the vigour of his youth.

It was seven o'clock, when they arrived in the Rue des Gravilliers, and still light; but Madame Durand had forgotten the number of the house. Fortunately they heard the sound of an instrument, and looking up, they saw M. Mistigris at a casement of the third story, who was playing, not a kit, but a violin, and hanging half out of the window, cried the figures aloud, as if he wished to set the passengers in the streets dancing.

"There, there—I see him!" said Madame Durand.

"The devil!" said Bellequeue; "it seems the ball has commenced already—he is calling out the figures. But where is the door?—It must be in this alley; come."

They went into a long, narrow, and very dark alley at the bottom of which they felt about for a staircase.

"Why, where are we going up this break-neck place?" said Jean.

"It is the ball," my son.

"They certainly ought to put a lamp here, or some kind of light, on dancing days," said Bellequeue. "But perhaps there is a porter here. Hollo!—Porter—Porter!"

No answer.

Bellequeue called again; when a broken voice from above said, "What's wanted?"

"We want M. Mistigris's ball-room."

"Go up to the third story."

"Yes; but we can't find the staircase."

"Go to the right, and at the bottom."

"Much obliged to you."

Bellequeue went first, and cried joyfully, "Victory! I have found the stairs;—take my hand, and I will guide you."

They followed Bellequeue, and began to see a little before them on the first story; on the second they could almost see the steps; and on the third it was sufficiently light for them to read on the door, "Mistigris, Teacher of all French and Foreign Dances.—Pumps are supplied.—Ring the bell."

Bellequeue pulled on his gloves, settled his cravat, and rang, whilst Madame Durand arranged her head-dress, and brushed the arm of her son, who had whitened himself in coming up stairs. A female, about fifty years old, opened the door and ushered

them into an antichamber, where they could plainly distinguish M. Mistigris's violin. After they had deposited their hats, Bellequeue took the hand of Madame Durand, saying, "Show us the ball-room." She led them through a long gallery, at the bottom of which they found a large room, furnished only with forms, and in which they saw no one but M. Mistigris, who continued to play his fiddle, and to call out the figures, still half way out of the window. Bellequeue and Madame Durand looked in every corner, hoping to discover the dancers. M. Mistigris perceived them, and leaving his window, advanced to pay his respects, still playing.

"Ah, here you are! how kind of you to recollect that this is my night. M. Bellequeue, I am delighted to see you—and my young pupil too; look at him already stretched out on the form. What activity! *La Poule.*"

So saying, M. Mistigris took up his old station at the window, bawling more loudly than ever.

"Ah! but where are the dancers, cousin?"

"Oh, they are not yet come."

"But they will come, surely?"

"Oh, certainly; but it's quite early yet."

"But why do you call out the figures, and play the violin, when you are quite alone?"

"Oh, habit;—and then, again, you know—the passengers,—I may get a customer. You play on some instrument, M. Bellequeue? I have a French horn there."

"No; I don't play."

"What a pity! We could make room for you at the window. But we may as well begin. There is nothing to prevent our forming a quadrille. Madame Durand and her son; M. Bellequeue, and my maid. Oh, she dances extremely well—much better than

she cooks, I assure you. But I have always accustomed her to do what is really useful. Here, Nannette, we want a fourth—you will see now."

But Madame Durand declared off, and Bellequeue had no idea of sporting his new gloves with a servant. Just then, some one rang. Mistigris drew himself up, and desired Nannette to open the door.

"I thought you wanted me to dance, sir?" said the servant, who had already taken off her apron.

"Open the door Nannette; you shall dance if we want you."

Nannette seemed disappointed at not being allowed to shew off her steps. However, she went out, and soon ushered in a tall young man, with nankeen pantaloons and blue stockings, who, advancing his right-foot in the second position, made a profound reverence to each person in the company.

"Very well—very well indeed, Charlot!" said Mistigris, without leaving the window; "a little lower—that's it; lean your head back well on your shoulders. And now a little scene from Annette and Lubin, before the ball."

Long Charlot took off his coat, and tying a red pocket handkerchief round his waist, seemed dressing for a character; whilst Mistigris said to Madame Durand, "This young man is studying for a pantomime, and he takes lessons of me; because, you know the pantomime is the eldest daughter of the dance. My good girl, sit down there, and you shall be the shepherdess."

The servant, who seemed equal to any thing, seated herself on a form. The young man danced into the middle of the room, then, gliding towards the shepherdess, he knelt on one knee, and commenced a declaration in dumb show; whilst Jean, who thought that Charlot had taken off his coat to play at leap-

frog, took off his own, and springing over Charlot's shoulders, he alighted between him and Nannette.

"Bravo!" said Bellequeue, "I never did better myself."

Just then the bell rang again; the shepherdess was obliged to go and open the door, and M. Mistigris said to the young man who was still on his knees, "My friend there are too many here to day: we will have the pantomime another time."

Madame Durand made her son put on his coat, and begged him to keep quiet. Four persons now entered the room, a mother and three daughters. M. Mistigris quitted his casement, crying "All the Mouton family! how delightful! we shall be in full force."

Madame Mouton was a large fat woman, fifty years of age; with her face full of pimples, and moustaches on her upper lip, that would have done honour to a conscript. Her head-dress consisted of a gauze cap covered with roses, whilst her three daughters had simple cottage bonnets, that almost hid their faces. Madame Mouton never failed to accompany her daughters; she was in fact one of M. Mistigris's most indefatigable dancers.

The Mouton family duly made their courtesies, to which Charlot replied by bowing down to the ground. Bellequeue drew on his gloves, saying, "This is a little more like business."

Mistigris had found a tambourine, which he placed near him on the casement and made signs to Jean that he should beat it, and accompany him on the violin. Jean took no pains to beat in time, he only tried to make a noise. But that was enough for Mistigris, who said, looking out of the window, "They hear us in the street; there are two persons looking up. Loud, Jean! *La chaine des dames.*"

More ringing ! these are three attorneys' clerks, who come to amuse themselves at M. Mistigris's ball, and probably to make some convenient acquaintances. Then a little girl of seven years old with her papa ; next, two girls or ladies, who seemed accustomed to go every where, and seated themselves in the room as if they were in the pit of a theatre.

" A large party," said Madame Durand ; " I knew my cousin was quite the fashion."

Bellequeue pretended to be looking about him, but took a sly glance at the glass to see if all was as it ought to be. M. Mistigris was delighted at his success, and his maid whispered him, " there are enough for two quadrilles, if I take a fourth in one."

" Places ! places !" said the dancing-master, from the casement, where he had established his orchestra. " Gentlemen, take your partners."

Two of the clerks handed out the young ladies who had come without papa or mamma, the third took one of the Misses Mouton ; Bellequeue another, and Charlot stood up with the little girl of seven years old. One couple was still wanting. There were no gentlemen remaining but the father of the little girl, who had the gout, and master Jean, who directly swore that he would not dance.

Madame Mouton jumped up, saying, " I will be a man ;" and leading out one of her daughters, she placed herself opposite Charlot.

M. Mistigris struck up ; the dance commenced ; Madame Mouton cried out, " Don't forget that I am a man," and chasséed forward with so much good will, that she upset the little girl, who was, however, soon again in her place, and the dance went on. It was now Bellequeue's turn ; he danced as they used to dance when powder was worn.

M. Mistigris was shocked. "That is no longer the fashion, M. Bellequeue."

"Never mind," said Bellequeue, "if not the fashion, it ought to be."

Jean, beat with so much vehemence, that he soon broke the tambourine. Mistigris stopped in utter despair. "Play on," said Madame Mouton, "play on, without the tambourine, we can mark time without it;" and indeed the good lady marked it to some purpose. Every spring she took made the forms rebound. But M. Mistigris, who had set his heart on an orchestra, went in search of a flageolet, which he handed to Jean, saying, "Do you think you could manage to blow this?"

"If it requires nothing but blowing," said Jean, "you shall see what I can do."

They recommenced the dance to the music of the violin, and the whistling of Jean, who blew in such a way as to make himself heard at either end of the street.

Whilst calling out the figures, Mistigris did not lose sight of his pupils, but cried to one, "round your arms;" and to another, "balance with spirit"—"now an *entrechat*"—"smile at your partner—why don't you smile?" Madame Mouton and Bellequeue appeared to profit by the master's lessons, for the one smiled everlastingly, and the other danced with such spirit, that the powder and pomatum ran in streams down his face.

At length the dance ended; it was high time, for Bellequeue and Madame Mouton seemed striving which should kick up the greatest dust. After the quadrille, Jean threw aside the flageolet, and taking a run, turned head over heels in the middle of the room.

"How childish!" said Madame Durand, "just as if he were only six years old."

"Sure proof of innocence and gaiety," said Bellequeue.

"True," said Madame Mouton, "I used to turn over head and heels very clèverly; I wonder if I could do it now."

As no one expressed any curiosity to see her make the attempt, she contented herself with praising Jean, and said, "How very hot it is: is there any refreshment?"

In place of all refreshment, the servant, who had no doubt an interest in the shoes, asked if any one would change their pumps, and M. Mistigris went round the room with a watering pot, saying, "There is no refreshment equal to this."

They stood up for a new quadrille, and this time Madame Mouton was the lady to Nannette's gentleman. Jean having had enough of the flageolet, Charlot took his place in the orchestra, and Madame Mouton called for "*La petite Laitière*," a figure she was very fond of. They danced several quadrilles, and Madame Mouton proved herself most indefatigable.

Jean, who soon got tired of looking on, had stretched himself on a form and was fast asleep. Mistigris said to Madame Durand, "Send your son every week, and you will see how rapidly he will improve. Besides, it is every thing to a young man to accustom himself to the good society which he will meet in these reunions. Would you believe it? I have larger parties than this. I have actually had twenty people at a time; then they pay ten centimes a quadrille; Nannette's perquisite you know."

It was now time to depart; Mme. Mouton wished to have an English country-dance. But two of the

clerks had already left, with the young ladies, who very willingly took their arms. Mme. Durand awoke her son, in order that they might follow. Nannette lighted them through the alley, and, at a quarter past ten, the dancing-master's ball was over.

Bellequeue was enchanted with his evening, although he scarcely hoped to escape a stiffness in his joints the next day. Mme. Durand asked her son how he had been amused,

"Not at all," replied Jean.

"How!" said she, "Had you no wish that you could dance?"

"I had no wish but to go to sleep."

"That is because you did not dance yourself; and as I wish you to become a good dancer like your godfather, you must go every week to M. Mistigris's ball."

Jean made no reply, and his mother whispered Bellequeue, "How easy it is to manage him: his father does not know how to go about it; he always talks Latin to him; but I can do just as I please with him. How extremely well he behaved this evening."

"Just like a man fifty years old," said Bellequeue.

The next day Jean complained to his friends of the evening he had spent at his dancing master's. "They say I must go again," said he: "I will; but I 'll take care they do not ask me a third time — with their arms rounded and their toes pointed out, swinging backwards and forwards, like a parcel of idiots. There was my godfather jumping about like a kid. I quite felt for him; surely a man ought not to make such a fool of himself."

"Certainly not," said Démar; "there would be more sense in mounting a *mât de cocagne*."

The night of the ball arrived. Mme. Durand, who no longer liked going out, had relied on Bellequeue accompanying her son. But he was still suffering from his last week's performance. Jean was more than fourteen, and fully able to take care of himself; but they could not depend on his going to his dancing-master's. Catherine was wanted at home. There remained, therefore, no one but M. Durand, who at length determined on going with his son. Jean had no wish for his father's company, and kept saying that he could go very well alone. But M. Durand took his hat and stick saying, "My son, you are too giddy to be trusted; *Experto crede Roberto;* that is to say, I shall go with you."

Their walk was a silent one; M. Durand talked readily only on one subject, for which Jean had no taste whatever; so that the father and son did not exchange a word.

This time, M. Mistigris had placed a candle at the bottom of his alley, betokening that something more than common was to be expected, which made Jean smile. On the staircase they met the Mouton family, who had arrived just before them. The mamma stopped at every third step, to ask her daughters if her cap sat well; for she too, had been struck by the apparition of the candle, which promised a brilliant assembly. In fact, there were three ladies and two gentlemen more than the last time, and Mistigris had engaged a little Savoyard, who was seated at the casement, and kept beating the tambourine even when they did not dance.

M. Durand held out his hand to M. Mistigris, saying, "*Salutem tibi;*" to which M. Mistigris, with a flourish of his foot, replied, "I am very well, I thank you."

The ladies seated themselves on the forms, whilst

the men walked up and down the room. Mistigris tuned his violin, and turning to the little Savoyard, said, "give me the *la*," to which the poor fellow innocently replied, "I have not got it, sir, you did not give it me."

Mlle. Nannette went and came as occasion required, taking off her apron every time she entered the ball-room, and putting it on again when she opened the door. Jean rejected the flageolet offered him by M. Mistigris, and walked up and down the room impatiently.

At length a set of sixteen was formed, including Nannette; and, whilst Mistigris played the prelude of the *Pantalon*, Jean took the opportunity of dropping a packet of fulminating-balls in the middle of the room.

"Now!" said Mistigris; and the dance commenced. But soon the most frightful explosions were heard on all sides. In vain they retreated or advanced; there was no escape. Master Jean had distributed his favours with too liberal a hand. The Misses Mouton screamed with terror; their mamma fainted; some wept; some cried for help. Long Charlot thought the house was falling, and the young clerks were ready to die with laughter.

M. Mistigris endeavoured to quiet them. "It is some wicked rival, jealous of my ball, who has played me this trick." And M. Durand, who, in trying to help Mme. Mouton, had exploded a ball at every step, looked every where for his son, saying, "Bring Jean here; let me feel his pockets."

Jean was no longer there; he had disappeared at the commencement of the dance.

Nannette went to the stair-head, crying, "Master Jean, your papa wants you."

No Jean answered; the woman advanced a little

farther, and perceived that there was no light in the outer room, which served as a cloak-room.

"Who has blown out the candle?" said Nannette, groping her way, "How ridiculous — its —"

Nannette did not finish; something tripped up her legs, and she fell with a loud cry, which was heard in the ball-room.

"Something has happened in the cloak-room," said M. Mistigris: "Is it possible that thieves can have got in? It's very astonishing that they should have chosen a time like this, when I have such a party."

The young men had already rushed into the passage to see what had occurred in the cloak-room: M. Mistigris followed them, his bow in his hand. Several of the ladies also came out, their curiosity overpowering their fear. But nobody brought out a light, not being aware that the anti-chamber was in darkness. When they got there, they had hardly taken a few steps before they met the same fate as Nannette. The number increased the disorder; some cried; others laughed. M. Mistigris vociferated for a light, and M. Durand, who had not made one of the curious, came out holding a light in one hand and his cane in the other.

On the arrival of the light, every body looked to see what had been the cause of so many tumbles, and soon perceived that two long strings had been extended across the room about ten inches from the floor.

"How shameful," cried the dancing master, who, in falling, had hurt his foot. "What an abominable trick, to make me and all my pupils take a false step. There is no overlooking this."

A burst of laughter was all the comfort M. Mistigris got; and Master Jean was seen holding the

door half open, and amusing himself at the expense of the victims of his trick.

"There is the guilty person," said Mistigris, pointing to Jean.

"Yes, it is he indeed," said M. Durand; "but I will avenge this company, whom my son has prostrated on the ground. *Tu castigaberis*, you rascal, Gentlemen and ladies, I will send you something for your bruises."

Saying this, M. Durand strode over those who were still on the floor, and ran towards the stairs, his awful cane uplifted, ready to chastise the guilty. But Jean did not wait for his father; he quickly descended the steps and ran through the alley to make the best of his way home to his mother.

The herbalist pursued his son through the streets, his cane in the air, crying, "Stop, you rascal." But Jean did not wait, and as a boy of fourteen runs faster than a man of fifty-four, the son got home long before the father.

Seeing her son return alone, Mme. Durand asked him what had happened? why he had returned so soon from M. Mistigris'? and what he had done with his father?

Jean answered, laughing, that all had gone wrong at the ball, that the dancers were amusing themselves with tumbling head over heels in the anti-chamber, and that he had lost his father in the street.

But M. Durand arrived in his turn, out of breath and furious; he entered the shop, his cane still threatening, and advanced towards his son, who, leaping over the counter, avoided the paternal blow, and ran to hide himself in his room, where he shut himself up. Mme. Durand held her husband by the tail of his coat, crying, "What is the matter, sir? In the name of

heaven, tell me, and don't flourish your cane, sir, that way. You remind me of Brutus in the play."

"Brutus has nothing to do with it, Madame," said the herbalist, sinking in a chair. "Your son is guilty. He has been playing his old tricks this evening. He deserves punishment; *qui bene amat bene castigat;* and I will show him that I am his father."

"But what has he done, sir, to put you in this rage?"

The herbalist related all that had passed at M. Mistigris'.

"And is it for that, that you are going to beat my child?" said Mme. Durand. "For these mere jokes, sir!"

"Jokes! Madame; a whole company terrified to death!"

"What! frightened by those balls?"

"Two ladies have been made quite ill. I don't know what may be the consequence."

"Silly fools."

"I myself, Madame, happening to tread on one of the cursed things, felt a shock that made my hair stand on end!"

"If you had been a soldier, sir, you would have felt nothing; I am sure M. Bellequeue would have danced in the midst of these explosions without making one *entrechat* the less."

"And the strings stretched across to make people fall, Madame, and ten or twelve persons upset in the dark!"

"A great deal more becoming, sir, than if it had been in the light."

"And our cousin, Mistigris, has sprained his leg!"

"Well, sir, you can cure him."

Madame, you may attempt it, but you cannot excuse your son; he is no longer a child; it is time to

be firm with him. I had resolved to do him the favour of a good caning, in deference to the rule, *moneat antequam feriat.* But let him take warning and confine himself to his room for a fortnight, and he shall be fed *cum pane et apua ;* that is my *ultimatum.*"

Mme. Durand argued no longer, but went to console her son. During the fortnight that Jean was supposed to be a close prisoner, Catherine brought him the key of the back-door, together with a fowl and a bottle of Bordeaux, which she said would agree with him much better than the bread and water prescribed by M. Durand.

CHAPTER VI.

The penance imposed by the herbalist on his son had not the wished-for effect. The Bordeaux and the chickens gave him a taste for good living, and the opportunity of going out and playing all day away from the eyes of his father, turned the confinement into a holiday. When the father is bent on severity, and the mother on indulgence, it is no easy matter to make an obedient son. People should often begin by reforming themselves, before they attempt to correct others. It is only when parents are united and a good example set, that children are likely to be brought up well.

Jean was sixteen when the death of Mme. Grosbleu, his godmother, took place. She left the whole of her fortune, amounting to nearly six thousand francs a-year, to her godson.

"You see," said Mme. Durand to her husband, "there is no occasion to bring up our son to any business, he will be very well provided for."

M. Durand replied, "that if their son did nothing from morning till night, he would fritter away his

whole fortune, and become a burden not only to himself but to all about him."

M. Durand was in the right, and had never spoken more to the purpose; but there was no persuading his wife that her son could ever be an annoyance to any one. She said, "Jean shall do as he likes; he is handsome, clever, and will have money in both pockets. There is very little, sir, that I think he will not be equal to."

M. Durand suggested that the most simple employment required that a person should be able to write and spell tolerably well. But his wife insisted that though that might be necessary for a poor clerk, it was not necessary for a gentleman.

"At least, Madame," said the herbalist, "do not tell your son what his godmother has left him. He is bad enough at present; but what will he become when he is told he is independent." As Bellequeue was of the same way of thinking, the mamma was over-persuaded; but she slipped a purse, containing five-and-twenty louis, into her son's hand, saying, "Here is a little present your poor godmother left you; don't waste it—but buy what you like."

Jean put a piece of gold in his pocket, and went in search of his dear friends, Démar and Gervais, and offered to treat them to whatever they chose. Friends at that age require very little pressing. They repaired to a café, where Démar gave Jean a lesson in billiards, whilst a handsome *déjeuner à la fourchette* was getting ready. Jean was delighted with the game, and determined to play often. Démar asked his friend to what they owed their treat; when Jean, pulling the piece of gold from his pocket, said, "A present from my godmother, I have a purse full of them."

"We will eat and drink the whole," said Gervais;

whilst Démar, fixing an eager eye on the glittering coin, said nothing. The breakfast was announced; Jean had ordered the best in the house. His mother said to him, "Buy what you like;" and he was acting up to her advice.

The three young men made the corks fly. Gervais was in ecstasies, and got tipsy before the breakfast was half over, and the frequent bumpers soon put Jean in the same state. Démar alone kept tolerably cool, and endeavoured to persuade Jean, how happy they should all three be, if they gave their parents the slip. Although Jean had pretty much his own way at home, he now entirely agreed with Démar. These gentlemen hob-nobbed and consecrated their friendship in a fresh bumper. Gervais stuttered, and became more and more fuddled. The wine made him moralize, and at length he grew extremely affectionate, and hugged and cried over his two friends.

Jean affected to be quite sober, but could scarcely hold his glass; and Démar seized the opportunity of proposing an oath, by which the three friends were to bind themselves that in future every thing should be in common between them.

Démar and Gervais could not lose much by this bargain. However, Jean was the first to seize the hands of his companions, which he squeezed affectionately, and in another bumper they sealed the engagement. Alas, poor Jean! What will not bad company do for him? and yet we hear so much of the sacred attachments of boyhood, and the friendships of college. For an oath to be of any value, is not it necessary that they who take it should understand what it binds them to? Surely, when ignorant of the world, of men, and of ourselves, we are hardly capable of judging of the future. And yet, at col-

lege, and in our teens, we are the most prodigal of our oaths.

These gentlemen made such a noise, drinking, talking, and singing, that all the respectable people were driven from the room. The master of the house not wishing to lose his best customers for the sake of three drunken boys, presented his bill, and gave them politely to understand, that their exuberant gaiety was rather too much for his customers, who came to take a cup of chocolate and read the daily papers.

By way of reply, Jean threw his piece of gold on the table, saying, "What the devil does this lemon-squeezer mean?"

"I believe he wants us to leave the house," said Démar.

"Indeed! what does he take us for? we won't budge."

"He pretends that we make too much noise," said Gervais.

"He does, does he? Egad; then we will give him enough of it;" and these youths commenced a chorus with an accompaniment of knives and forks, which astounded the landlord.

"For God's sake, gentlemen, leave the room. I do not keep a pothouse."

The three young men laughed in his face, and struck the table, as if they wished to crack its marble top. Completely exasperated, the landlord made a sign to one of his waiters, who ran to the neighbouring gate for the guard. Four grenadiers and a corporal soon made their appearance, at the sight of whom, Gervais ensconced himself under the table; Jean wrapped his napkin round his head like a turban, and pelted the corporal with bread crumbs, which he rolled up for the purpose. The soldiers

advanced; Jean and Démar would not stir; whilst Gervais, half sobered by the fright, crawled under the tables, and gained the door. The corporal gave the word, "Seize these two men." The *two men*, who might number thirty-one years between them, would fain resist, and threw several plates at the soldiers' heads. Their strength was not equal to their courage. They were soon overpowered and dragged to the guard-house in the midst of a mob, whom the noise had drawn together.

Bellequeue was quietly entering his house, his hat in one hand, and his cane in the other, when the noise and uproar attracted his curiosity. He could scarcely believe his eyes, when he thought he saw his godson marching sullenly between two soldiers. It was indeed Jean; and they were leading him to the guard-house with another boy about his own age.

Bellequeue renewed his youth at the sight; he ran after the soldiers, made his way through the crowd, and was in the guard-room almost as soon as the two prisoners. He made up to Jean, asking what was the matter, and was much relieved, on finding that it was only an affair of some broken plates which might soon be settled. He begged the officer to let his godson go; but the young man had made resistance, the commander said, and must be punished.

Bellequeue threw the fault on the wine, which had made them tipsy. The commander said, they must be punished for their drunkenness. He declared, at last, that he would give up the young people only to their fathers. Bellequeue said, a godfather was the same thing; but the officer was inflexible, and Bellequeue had nothing for it, but to go and relate the whole affair to Durand.

Bellequeue reached the herbalist's shop quite out

of breath. His hat was on his head, a sure sign that something very extraordinary had happened.

"I come from my godson," said he, running in; "he is in the guard-house."

"In the guard-house!" cried Madame Durand; "good God! my son has been fighting."

Catherine ran to her mistress, and held a vinaigrette to her nose, as she was nearly fainting.

The herbalist cried, "My son in the guard-house! He must have insulted a sentinel."

"Don't alarm yourself," said Bellequeue, "it is not so bad as all that. A row in a café after a *déjeuner* with some friends: the young people were tipsy: it will be a lesson for them in future. Come, my dear Durand, just come and say you are the father, and he will be let out."

"Run, sir; run, sir," said Madame Durand.

"Wait a minute, Madame," said the herbalist. "My son has got into the guard-house; you may depend upon it he deserved it; it would serve him right if I left him there. Very creditable, indeed, at sixteen to be shut up in a guard-house! very promising, no doubt. Had he studied botany, Madame, he would not now be where he is, *studia adolescentiam alunt, senectutem oblectant.*"

Madame Durand felt that her husband had reason on his side, but she again entreated him to go and relieve her son. M. Durand, who in his heart was really fond of his child, went at length to the guard-house with Bellequeue, where the business was soon settled. They set the young people at liberty, though Démar's father took no trouble about him; But Bellequeue became surety for him at the request of his godson.

Jean was sobered; he followed his father without saying a word, and made up his mind for a severe

lecture. M. Durand, however, was silent, and on arriving at his house he contented himself with leading his son to his bedroom, and pushing him in, he locked the door, and put the key in his pocket. Then going down to his wife, he said, "You see, Madame, the pretty way in which your darling has behaved. If he was left his own master, he would pay another visit to the guard-house ere long, and it will end in his being kept there. He has picked up some very good-for-nothing acquaintances; but I am determined there shall be an end to all this."

"Well, sir, what do you propose doing?" said Madame Durand.

"What do I propose doing? I mean to call our relations and acquaintances together, and consult on the means of making Jean a little more steady."

The scene at the guard-house had frightened Madame Durand, and she consented to the family council. That very evening the herbalist wrote to all who had been present at the christening, that is to say, to all who were still alive, requesting their attendance on the morrow, to favour him with their advice.

The poor domino-player had seen his last game; and M. Endolori had rendered up the ghost in spite of three doses which he had taken at once. Until the meeting of his friends, M. Durand, who distrusted his wife and Catherine, himself took the prisoner his meals, which this time were literally bread and water. Jean was the more annoyed as he had still in his possession plenty of those yellow coins with which a good breakfast is so easily procured.

The relations and friends were punctual. M. and Madame Renard arrived first, still cap-makers, though now they affected rather more fashion in their business. Then M. and Mlle. Forreau; for, despite her gaiety, childish ways, and dulcet voice, Mlle. Ag-

laë remained unmarried. Her moral features were still the same; her physical, indeed, were much altered; there was no longer any thing youthful about her. Next, M. Mistigris appeared, who had not given a dancing lesson to his little cousin since the fatal evening. Madame Ledoux was not forgotten. At sixty-five, she talked as glibly as ever of her three husbands and fourteen children. Bellequeue completed the party. He was dressed in black as most suitable to so solemn an occasion.

When all were seated in the bedroom, which served as drawing room, M. Durand bowed and said, "Ladies and gentlemen, you know why I have requested your company?"

"Yes, we know," said Bellequeue.

"I don't," said M. Renard.

"I rather think I have forgotten," said M. Forreau.

"You had better tell us again," said Madame Ledoux; "my husband, the bailiff, always told me every thing twice over; a capital plan."

"Ha! ha! ha! how droll," said Mlle. Aglaë.

"It is on account of our son Jean."

"Yes," said Madame Durand, "we wish to speak about my son. He was sixteen years old the fifteenth of last March."

"I recollect," said Madame Renard;" it froze extremely hard. You forgot your black silk nightcap, M. Renard, and caught cold."

"It was very slippery," said M. Mistigris; "did I not step so lightly, I should have broken my nose in the Rue Pastourelle."

"What a fine boy my cousin has grown," said Mlle. Aglaë. "He is bigger than me. He! he! he!"

"He is a fine fellow," said Bellequeue, "so upright, and such a head of hair."

"Yes," said Madame Ledoux, "he is exactly like

my eleventh, by the—by the—good gracious me! I can't recollect whether it was the upholsterer or the stationer. It is astonishing how one's memory goes."

"But, ladies and gentlemen, we are wandering from the question: my son Jean is sixteen years old. He is well grown, it is true; but he knows nothing, and will do nothing."

"Oh, sir, you are going rather too far," said Madame Durand—"knows nothing! Ask his godfather if he can handle a foil."

"Most gracefully," said Bellequeue. "He can smoke a cigar too, without its making him sick."

"He knows nothing of dancing" said Mistigris, shrugging his shoulders. "I was four months trying to beat a *jeté-battu* into his head. I must say I don't think he has much capability."

"Not much capability," cried Madame Durand, looking sternly at the old dancing master. "You are no longer a young man, cousin, and cannot bring on your pupils as you used to do."

"Cousin," said Mistigris, drawing himself up, "I have just finished two young linendrapers of the Rue St. Avoie. Go to the Grande Chaumière, and see how they dance. There you may see whether I can teach or not." And to shew what he was equal to, Mistigris essayed a *pirouette*, which stretched him on the ground, having, he said, slipped on something.

"One of my boys was a beautiful dancer," said Madame Ledoux, "my fourth — or my second — no, my last."

"But, to return," said the herbalist: "we must not lose sight of the question."

"Ha! ha! very true," laughed Mademoiselle Aglaë.

"My son can fence and smoke: *concedo*. He can

even swear with considerable energy; and it appears he would fain learn to drink."

"One of my husbands was a great tippler," said Madame Ledoux. "I don't exactly recollect whether it was the bailiff, the upholsterer, or the stationer."

"At least," said Madame Durand, "his morals are pure; and as to women, he is innocence itself. He can't even look a neighbour straight in the face."

"I admit," said the herbalist, "there is nothing to reproach him with on that score. But my son is sixteen years old; he does nothing from morning to night, but play with every idle vagabond he meets. Not very creditable, certainly, to a father who has spent his life in searching into the secrets of nature. May I beg your advice as to what we shall do with him."

"If he knew how to dance," said Mistigris, "I could at once find employment for him. I am well received in the first-rate houses: but how can I introduce a young man who does not know how to make a bow?"

"If he had any taste for haberdashery," said M. Renard, "one might start him in that line. But he should understand accounts, and have the multiplication table at his fingers' ends."

"I once thought," said Bellequeue, "it would have been well to have sent him as a soldier. But the day is gone by; all the world is at peace, and I see no use in spending one's life in a barrack."

"For me," said M. Fourreau, "I think—that is, I advise—if the young man—one does not well know—upon my word, it is very puzzling."

"I had a great deal of trouble with one of my children," said Madame Ledoux. "And of my daughters—no, one of my sons—I can't exactly say which—but I know it was by one of my three hus-

bands. I don't exactly recollect what folly she had been guilty of. But this I am certain of, that—I have forgotten what it was."

"But," said Mademoiselle Aglaë, bashfully, "if, he! he! he!—if you—ah! ah! ah!—if you—oh! oh! oh!—it would be a good joke—to marry him."

"Marry him!" said Madame Durand, "what at sixteen years of age?"

"Upon my word," said Bellequeue, "if he had been eighteen, I should have said that the advice was not bad."

"My son is still a mere child," said the herbalist, gravely. "He would not understand the duties of a husband. He cannot make a *tisan;* how can you expect him to manage a household."

"Besides," said Madame Durand, "what woman would marry such a boy?"

"Ah, there is no saying," replied Mademoiselle Aglaë, fidgetting on her chair. "Sometimes, he! he! he!—we see"——

"Marriage is out of the question," said the herbalist; "I repeat it, my son Jean ought to do something else than play at hoop or ball with every blackguard in the neighbourhood. One might overlook it in a child of eight; but at sixteen he is no longer a child, and things cannot remain *in statu quo.*"

"Well, sir," replied Madame Durand impatiently, "do you yourself propose some proper occupation for the dear child, whom you treat like a negro, and whom you have never loved, because he had no taste for botany. Do you think, sir, that I would ever consent to his being exiled to the East or West Indies, because, gifted with a lively imagination and quick talents, he cannot be tied down to a counter? Eh, sir; what have you to say? Reply, and don't you yourself remain *in sta cocu!*"

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This was Madame Durand's first attempt at any other language than her own: but her memory had failed her. The quotation, instead of pleasing the herbalist, seemed to increase his bad temper, and he cried, "Madame, I beg of you never to attempt Latin again, you are guilty of solecisms."

"I don't know what I am guilty of, sir; but this I say before my family and friends, that your severity gave him a distaste for study."

"Rather say, Madame, that your weakness spoiled him; that you ruined his natural good qualities, and made him obstinate and disobedient."

"I cannot forget, sir, your very pretty way of teaching the child your lessons; it was by flogging him."

"Had he been flogged a little oftener, Madame, he would have known to-day what an herbalist should be."

"Come, M. Durand—my dear gossip," said Bellequeue, turning from husband to wife, "surely you are not going to quarrel. Oh, for shame! such a happy family! that every body in the neighbourhood looks up to. You did not ask us all here to dispute, surely."

The relations enjoyed the quarrel very quietly, without taking the least trouble to put an end to it. Madame Renard smiled; M. Renard gave a knowing look at his wife; Mademoiselle Aglaë laughed; M. Fourreau opened his saucer eyes; Mistigris admired his feet, very well pleased that his little cousin was the bone of contention: and Madame Ledoux tried to recollect for which of her children, and with which of her husbands, she had had just such another brawl.

The arrival of Catherine changed the scene. She ran into the room very much agitated. "Oh Madame, Madame! Master Jean is gone!"

"Gone!" cried Madame Durand, whilst they all crowded about the servant, whom the herbalist begged to explain.

"You know, Sir," said Catherine, "it was only this morning you gave me the key of master Jean's room, and told me to bring him here in proper time. Thinking that the poor dear might want something, or that he was tired of being so long alone, I ran up to his room; when I entered, I looked about every where, but no master Jean was to be seen. His wardrobe was open, and the drawers empty. He must have made a bundle of his things, and as his window looks on the roof which joins the hayloft, he must have gone out that way."

"My son has left us," said Madame Durand, sinking insensible in her chair. Catherine flew to help her. M. Durand went up to his son's room. Madame Ledoux made off to recount the event to all her acquaintances. Bellequeue took his hat and cane, saying, "I pledge myself to find him for you;" whilst the cousins quietly agreed, that since Jean was off, it was useless troubling themselves any more about him.

CHAPTER VII.

When a young man has attained his sixteenth year, it will not do to keep him on bread and water, to threaten him with the cane; in short, to treat him like a child. As soon as we are of an age to understand what is said to us, to feel the consequences of our faults, and to judge of the results that may follow, it is only by an appeal to our reason—an attack on our hearts—by an endeavour to enlighten our minds, or to rectify our judgment, that we can be effectually corrected. I may be told, that there are some young people who have no judgment, and whose hearts are hardened against all good impressions—I can only say, that such are incorrigible, and that bread and water will rather make them worse than better.

Accustomed from infancy, as he was, to have his own way, Jean was not a little surprised to find himself really a prisoner. Every moment he thought he heard the step of his mother, or Catherine; but neither mother nor Catherine appeared. He was visited in the evening by his father, who brought with

him prisoner's fare, merely saying, "*suum cuique tribuito.*" As Jean was not master of Latin, he understood this to mean, "you shall have nothing else to eat;" and as soon as his father had shut the door, in his rage he kicked the pitcher of water into the middle of the room, and threw the bread out of the window, saying, "I would rather starve than eat such stuff as this."

When he awoke the next morning, however, his stomach gave him ample warning that he had eaten nothing for four-and-twenty hours. He looked about for the bread he had so much contemned the night before, and recollected, to his sorrow, that he had thrown it out of the window. It is thus that we often regret what we did not value while in our possession—we frequently commit this fault in the course of our lives, and may therefore well excuse it in a boy of sixteen.

Jean paced the room impatiently. He tried the door, which was fast, and muttered and cursed—in which you have been told he excelled. "How long do they mean to leave me in this dungeon? I am hungry. *Sacre bleu!* Surely my father does not mean I should be starved. If I had not thrown the bread out of the window, there would have been enough for this morning, certainly. But how could I eat bread and drink water, when I have twenty-four yellow boys there, which would treat me and my friends so capitally? My poor friends, whom I have not seen since our adventure of yesterday, how uneasy they must be about me!"

Every moment increased the impatience and appetite of Jean. He took his gold, counted it, and stamped on the floor with rage. At last, dashing open the window, he cried, "Curse me, if I stay here any longer. If my father takes pleasure in shutting

me up in a cage, I can tell him I have no pleasure in being shut up."

Jean looked out on the roof. There were scarcely three steps from his window to that of a hay-loft. Though the distance was short, there was some little danger. But at sixteen we risk our lives for a joke, notwithstanding that life is then most delightful; and at sixty we take a thousand precautions to guard against death, although weighed down by infirmity. There is not much more to be said for our sense at sixty than at sixteen.

Jean had already his gold in his pocket, and one foot on the roof. He was delighted. Having returned to his room, he opened his wardrobe, and quickly made up a tolerably bulky parcel of clothes, saying, "I had better take enough; for it strikes me I shall not be in a hurry to return. I must give my father's anger time to cool. Besides, all these things are mine, and I may do what I like with my own."

Jean leaped on the roof, holding his bundle in one hand; in two strides he gained the hay-loft, and thence the staircase which led into the alley. All this was done very quietly; for he wished to avoid an encounter with his parents. They, however, were still at the meeting summoned to decide on his fate. Jean had already decided, and set off at a quick pace to meet his friends at the Place Royale.

Démar and Gervais had been long looking out for him. We do not readily forget a friend who has once given us a capital breakfast, and is also very likely to do the same again. The awkward wind-up of the last treat was soon forgotten by these gentlemen. It was not the first scrape they had been in; though they had hitherto escaped, the one trusting to his legs, and the other to his impudence.

"Here he is! Here's Jean," cried both Démar and Gervais at the same time.

"Yes, my good lads, here I am," said Jean, wiping his forehead, "I have run till I am quite out of breath. I was deucedly afraid of being caught. What do you think of their shutting me up on bread and water like a baby of six years old?"

"Shocking! I never heard of such a thing. Shut up a man like us! for we are no longer boys."

"I am sure I am full five foot three; which is a pretty good size for a man."

"Yes," said Gervais, "and look at my moustaches."

"Well, my friends, I soon made up my mind; I said, 'I am not your slave.'"

"To be sure not."

"'I will not stay here to be fed on bread and water, when I can get something a devilish deal better.'"

"You were very right."

"So I put my money in my pocket, made a bundle of my clothes, scrambled out of the window over the roofs of the houses, and here I am—ready to go with you to the world's end, if you like."

"My dear Jean," said Démar, hugging him, "you are a noble fellow. But are you sure you have got all your money?"

"Oh yes, quite sure. You will come, won't you?"

"Oh yes, nothing shall separate us."

"Well, then, the sooner we go the better. My godfather, Bellequeue, is very likely to come after me—though I suppose you will want to go home first."

"What for?" said Démar; "I have my wardrobe on my back, and there is no use in bidding my father good bye, as he has already turned me twice out of doors, wishing to God he might never see me again."

"As for me," said Gervais, "I was well kicked this morning. They are always calling me lazy; to be sure, I am very fond of play. I have an old pair of trowsers and a waistcoat at home; but theyare not worth going home for; especially as we have agreed to share every thing between us; and Jean has clothes enough for us all."

"Exactly so," said Démar.

"Well then, my lads, let us be off."

"Which way?"

"Never mind, let us make for a barrier; and once in the country—"

The three school boys set off. They soon reached the Boulevards, then the Fauxbourgs, and left Paris by the barrier of Ménil-Montant. Jean was half-starved, but he would not stop till he felt quite safe.

Once through the barrier, they looked about for a house of entertainment. There was no scarcity of tayerns at Ménil-Montant. The fugitives pitched upon that whose larder seemed best furnished, and ordered dinner. Jean had been taught caution by the former adventure, and not wishing to have his travels cut short at the onset, drank very sparingly, and persuaded his comrades to follow his example.

The best dinner at a tavern, at Ménil-Montant, costs less than a *déjeuner à la fourchette* at a café in Paris. Jean was much surprised at receiving change out of one of his pieces, and after paying the bill, he cried, joyfully, "At this rate we shall have money enough for a long time; don't let us think of anything but amusing ourselves."

"Of course, of course," said Démar.

"Of course, of course," echoed Gervais.

They set out, and soon gained the country, laughing and playing all sorts of tricks. From time to time, Démar would stop at some fine point of view, and

beg them to observe how delightful the country appeared. "Is it not a thousand times better to be here, breathing the fresh air, than to be sitting at a desk; and to be one's own master, instead of being ordered about by others?"

"To be sure," said Gervais; "nothing like liberty and a good dinner."

"No doubt," said Jean, "a man is born free. I have always heard my godfather say, that travel finishes a young man. Well, when we are finished, we will return home."

"Don't let us forget our oath," cried Bémar; "and share and share alike."

"Oh, yes, we are not children."

"Nor weathercocks."

"Ah, my lads," cried Gervais, "here is a capital place for leap-frog—it will give us an excellent appetite for supper."

No sooner said than done. They were wild with glee. Gervais, in jumping over Jean's back, tore his pantaloons behind, the seat of which was nearly threadbare.

"Oh what shall I do?" said he, "see what a pretty figure I cut. I never can go into the village in this way; I shall have all the boys after me. What shall I do, for I have no others."

"How," said Jean, "do you forget my bundle? Open it; you will find more than one pair."

They seated themselves under the trees; Jean opened his bundle, and paraded its contents before his companions. There were two pair of trowsers, one grey, which had been worn some time, the other blue, quite new.

"I'll take this," said Gervais, pouncing on the blue pair, to which Jean made no opposition.

"You take right good care of number one," said

Démar. "If anything happens to my trowsers, I must put up with this old grey pair."

"What's that to you, "said Gervais, "its Jean's not yours."

"Yes, it is as much mine as Jean's, because we have agreed to share every thing between us."

"Then it is as much mine as yours," said Gervais.

"I don't care, you shan't put them on."

"I will though."

"You shan't."

"Shan't I?"

Blows followed, and the combatants were soon rolling in the dust.

Jean seeing that the quarrel had become serious, ran to separate them, crying, "Hallo! gentlemen, is this a specimen of the eternal friendship you have sworn? As every thing is to be common between us, I do not exactly see why you are to box for a pair of pantaloons. There, Gervais, take them, as yours are torn, and don't let us have any more of this folly." Gervais crowed over Démar, who was compelled to gulp down his ill humour.

When Gervais had finished his toilet, they recommenced their walk. "What shall we do with these," said he, pointing to his old trowsers.

"They are only fit to throw away," said Démar.

"Perhaps we can get them mended," said Jean, "and then they might be worn again."

"I'll take very good care that I'll not wear them," said Démar.

"Nor I, either," said Gervais, "I'll tie them up in this tree, they will make a capital scare-crow."

It was a dark night when the young travellers arrived at Bagnolet. They had made very little way, for they were continually wandering from the high road.

"We must sleep here," said Jean.

"Yes," said Gervais, "and make a good supper; and after breakfast, we must start again."

"But what sort of a place is this? I don't see any tavern, it is only a paltry village."

"Why, it is not Ménil-Montant to be sure; but when you are travelling, you must take the rough and smooth together."

"What do you mean by that?"

"I mean, that you will not have a good larder every where."

"Boys, I smell something savoury; we are not far from our supper." And in fact they soon reached an inn.

They walked boldly into the large room which led to the kitchen, and called out to know if they could sup and sleep there. The landlord, his wife, and the servant, all ran from the kitchen to see the new arrival, and were not a little surprised at the youthful appearance of the three travellers.

"My good man, have you room for us?" said Démar, in a pompous manner, which assorted very ill with his shabby genteel appearance.

"You are on a party of pleasure, gentlemen?" said the host, smiling.

"What's that to him?" said Gervais.

"We are willing to pay handsomely," said Jean; "we don't want the means."

"Then, gentlemen, you shall have the best we can produce. We are not in the habit of giving beds, but we will contrive to manage for you."

"But, mind, a capital supper," said Gervais.

"I'll engage you will be satisfied, sir."

The young people seated themselves round a table which had never known a table-cloth, and whilst

their supper was dressing, they drank a glass of wine with the landlord.

"These are your holidays, I suppose, gentlemen?" said he.

"Yes, it's holiday time with us," said Jean, winking to his companions.

"And you are come to enjoy yourselves here: you are quite right; the neighbourhood is delightful, and there are a great many country houses about."

"What's the name of your village?"

"Bagnolet; what! did not you know you were in Bagnolet?"

"It's all the same to us," said Démar, "whether we are in Bagnolet or Rognolet."

"Gentlemen," said the host, "to-morrow, if you please, I will show you the house where the Cardinal Duperron formerly lived, who, after drinking twenty-two glasses of wine, jumped the length of twenty-two feet in his garden."

"He jumped a devilish deal farther than I could," said Jean.

"When he grew old, he made many alterations in the garden, but he never altered the walk where he had jumped the twenty-two feet. I will also show you——"

"I say, my good friend, could you shew us some pipes?"

"What! do you smoke already?"

"A little, my buck."

"What! they smoke, then, at your school?"

"Thou hast said it."

"Oh, I always keep pipes for the waggoners. I will get you some."

"What a chattering old coxcomb," said Gervais.

"I say," said Démar, "did you take notice what a very pretty girl the servant is?"

"And what of that?" said Jean.

"Why, its pleasanter — besides, there is no knowing ——"

"Ah, he has always some nonsense in his head. Come, here is the supper — worth all the servants in the world."

The supper consisted of veal and rabbits. The pepper had not been spared; but the young men found every thing excellent, and the meal soon disappeared before them. Gervais wanted something delicate by way of dessert. But the house afforded nothing but some *fromage de jérômé*, with which they were fain to be content.

Supper finished, these gentlemen lighted their pipes, to the great astonishment of their landlord, who exclaimed, "So young! and they smoke like waggoners. What a capital school they must belong to."

Having eaten and drank their fill, they were half asleep over their pipes. The host recommended them to go to bed, and the girl conducted them to their chamber.

They had made up three beds in a large room which was used for wedding parties and other grand occasions. Gervais chose the bed farthest from the window and door, and throwing himself on it, said, "I shall sleep here."

"He never thinks of any one but himself," said Démar; and going over to Gervais, he caught hold of his legs, dragged him into the middle of the room, and took his place on the bed. Gervais got up, intending to serve him the same way. But Démar was prepared for him, and gave him a tremendous kick in the side, which sent him yelling into the middle of the room.

Jean was obliged to get up. "Will you stop fighting?" said he.

"It is this rascally hangdog who has taken my bed," said Gervais, crying and rubbing his side.

"It's no more your bed than mine," said Démar. He must have the best of every thing—the most comfortable bed. But you will not get this. Here I am, and here I will stay."

"Never mind, Gervais; go sleep, lad, and stop crying. Is this the way for friends to behave to each other?"

Gervais went muttering to bed. Jean turned in also, saying to himself, "We did not share in common in order to be always quarrelling; and when we are all on a level, no one has a right to order another."

Jean slept late. When he awoke, he had got rid of the fumes of the wine and tobacco. He was at first astonished to find himself in the chamber of an inn, instead of in his own room at his father's house. For the first time he reflected on the consequences of his flight. He thought of his father—of his mother—of that mother who loved him so truly; and who, perhaps, at that very moment was weeping his loss. The very money which was to support him in his disobedience, she had given him. Something whispered that he had not acted rightly. A sigh escaped him, and his eyes were dimmed with tears. Had he been alone, he would have flown to that dear mother though bread and water were again to be his fate. However, he could not quit his comrades; influenced by a false shame, he had not courage to withstand the gibes and mockeries of Gervais and Démar. In how many faults do we persevere to avoid the sneers of people, whom in our hearts we despise, and with whom we feel we ought to have nothing in common!

Démar and Gervais, who had been a long time up, returned to the room, which put an end to Jean's reflections. He was at once struck with a very great change in their appearance. Démar had taken from the bundle a handsome frock, a cassimere waistcoat, the grey trowsers, and some clean linen. Gervais thought that a dirty waistcoat and collar did not at all accord with the blue trowsers; he had therefore ensconced himself in a surtout which remained in the bundle, and completed his dress with a clean waistcoat and cravat. Jean's bulky parcel had wasted away, as there remained nothing but some shirts and stockings.

"What a smart appearance you cut," said Jean, looking at them.

"Yes," said Démar, carelessly, "we took what we wanted from the bundle. We look much better, don't we?"

"Well you may; you have got my best clothes."

"Oh, don't mind that; you know every thing is common between us; what one wants, the other ought to give; nothing can be fairer."

"Oh yes, fair enough," said Jean; but he could not help making a wry face, when he saw that his dear friends had appropriated his best clothes.

"By the bye," said Démar, "the money——let us count how much we have."

Jean drew forth his gold from his purse, and reckoned it on the table.

"My reckoning is soon made," said Gervais, "I have not a farthing."

"I have exactly twenty-four sous," said Démar, "which I add to the public fund;" and so saying, he chucked his coppers on Jean's heap.

"Now," said he, "divide into three parts, and let each one take his share."

"What for?" said Jean.

"Why have not we sworn to share good and bad fortune alike? Now, money is a blessing, so let us divide it."

"But since we are not to be separate, why separate the money? if one is paymaster, that is quite enough."

"Why," said Gervais, "if Jean pays for every thing, I want nothing more. I am not one of your sticklers for ceremony."

"No, no," said Démar, "it is better to divide; that won't hinder Jean from paying whatever he pleases."

"The deuce a bit will I divide," said Jean pocketing his money. "Wear my clothes, and welcome; but as for this gold, if I spend it with you, the least you can allow me, is the pleasure of paying it away.

Jean said this very firmly. Although Démar was seventeen, he was neither so tall nor so strong as Jean. He thought it better, therefore, to drop the subject.

Gervais had not forgotten to order breakfast. A servant came to tell them that the repast was ready, in the same room where they had supped the night before. Démar tried to kiss the girl; but she pushed him away, calling him "a hobble-dy-hoy," which highly amused his friends. Démar was greatly annoyed, and tried to catch hold of her, but she boxed his ears soundly.

"That will teach him to teaze the girls," said Jean, laughing.

"Let's to breakfast," said Gervais, "that will make him forget his repulse."

The three young men made a hearty meal. Jean paid the bill without a word, and the travellers set

out with their packs to Paris. The warmth of their friendship had already abated. Démar was sulky; Gervais would not play, for fear of spoiling his fine clothes; and Jean sighed from time to time when he thought of his mother and Paris.

"How! O, we will see. I am determined I will never go back to my father."

"Nor I to my relatives," said Gervais; "they would set me to work again."

"Well, then, gentleman, we are inseparable."

"Certainly; and how much better off we are than if we were at home."

Jean said nothing; but seemed lost in thought.

They had just arrived at a little town—it was Coulommiers. "What a pretty place," said Démar.

"Yes," said Gervais; "they ought to have capital fish here—you see the river is quite close. Oh, there is a *restaurateur's*, as good as you would see in Paris; let us dine there."

"But," said Jean, "had not we better economize our money, and not order without knowing——"

"Bah! bah! time enough—Let us dine first and reckon afterwards."

They entered a *restaurateur's*, who presented the young people a *carte*, as in Paris. Gervais's mouth watered as he read over the list, and cried, "We must taste that—and that—and that."

"Yes," said Jean, "and so get rid of one of our louis."

"Well—there will be another left."

"But after——"

"After—we shall dine well, that is the main point."

"You think of nothing but eating."

"And you are good for nothing but sermonizing. Why did you take charge of the purse, if you groan in this way every time you draw the strings?"

"I rather think the purse belonged to me."

"No; it belonged to us all, as we all added our stocks."

"Your stocks! You mean to say that the stock was mine, and that you had nothing."

"Stop; you are not going to throw that in our face. You are a pretty friend!"

For the first time they quarrelled at the dinner-hour. The soup appeared, and Jean cried, "Well, let what I have follow the rest—it is all the same to me."

Dinner over, they went to walk about the town. They learnt that on the next day there would be held a large market, almost a fair, which would bring in all the surrounding neighbourhood.

"A famous opportunity," said Démar to his companions, "to try and pick up a little money, by making some exhibition for the country people."

"What exhibition?" said Gervais.

"I don't know—we must think."

"Let us consider," said Jean. "I vote for an exhibition."

They returned to the inn, where they intended to sleep, and during supper each endeavoured to hit on some amusing way of making money.

"Suppose we try some tricks at cards."

"The clodhoppers are as deep as you."

"I," said Gervais, "can stand on my hands, with my feet in the air, for three minutes together."

"Any one may do that."

"I can swallow ribbons."

"That is too common."

"I can balance a chair at the end of my nose."

"That is as bad."

"Gervais, you have such an excellent stomach, could not you contrive to swallow a knife?"

"No, no; I couldn't."

"Just try."

"No, I thank you; you must excuse me."

"If we had but some rarity to show—country people are so very curious, we should gain a great deal of money."

"What the devil can we show them that they have never seen before?"

"Egad," said Gervais, slapping himself behind, "I could show them what they had never seen before."

"Yes," said Démar, "but don't you think they would make you feel what you never felt before."

"No, that will never do."

"Ah, boys, a thought strikes me; let us show them a monster—such as we see on the Boulevard du Temple."

"A monster! but where the devil is he?"

"Why where do you think all the monsters come from? We must make one, to be sure; the deuce is in it if we cannot manage one between us."

"There is something in that. Let us set about it; we must have the most monstrous monster ever seen."

"Let us see, who will be the beast? Gervais, eh!"

"Yes, he is naturally by no means deficient in ugliness."

"I have no objection."

"Démar shall invite the people to walk in, and I show the animal. In the mean time we must think on what we shall make."

"A giant?"

"Oh, no, we should want pasteboard legs and arms."

"A fish?"

"The dress, again."

"If we had a parcel of oyster-shells to cover his waistcoat and trowsers, and a few to stick in his hair, what a very extraordinary fish he would make."

"Yes, but we have no oyster-shells, so you must think of something else."

"Confound it, it is no easy thing to make a monster, I see."

"Stay," said Jean, striking his forehead; "look

yonder at that pasteboard head, which has been left here by some *marchande de modes.*"

"What then?"

"You say you can stand on your hands, Gervais?"

"Yes, for a short time, provided I lean my feet against the wall."

"Capital! there is our monster."

"I don't understand you."

"You stand on your hands with your head downwards: we will cover your legs with your great coat, and stuff the arms with straw: then we will stick this head between your feet, and cover it with a wig and hat; and we will give out that we have a man with two heads, one above and the other below."

"Not bad, really."

"Yes, but if they discover the upper head to be——"

"Oh, people never come too near monsters, and we will stick you in a dark corner. Besides, we must run some risk. It is agreed then we show a man with two heads."

It was thought necessary to have an immediate rehearsal. They went into the town and bought an old wig, with which they covered their pasteboard head. They made magnificent moustaches and eyebrows with burnt cork, and fastened the whole to the collar of the riding-coat, with a large cravat. The arms they stuffed with straw taken from one of the beds.

"And the hands?" said Gervais.

"Oh, we must do without: when a man has two heads, he need not be particular about hands. You, Gervais, need only wear a waistcoat. Up with you; let us see how it looks."

Gervais settled himself. They wrapped his legs in the great coat, the skirts of which descended to his

middle, where they fastened it with pins, and Jean and Démar were lost in admiration.

"How well it looks! it really is extremely curious: I am sure we shall gain a great deal of money by you."

"Yes, but I can't stay in this way long."

"Never mind; when there are no visitors present, you can stand up; and we shan't always have a crowd."

"And the caravan for our monster?"

"I will undertake to construct one with three or four broomsticks, and a few yards of strong stuff."

The three travellers went to bed, delighted with their scheme, which promised both fun and profit. Next day, after having breakfasted, and paid for the head, which they said they wanted as a doll for their little sister, they walked towards the place where the market was held. They bought several yards of stuff, which cost them rather more than they expected, and Jean said to his companions, "In order that we may cover our expenses, we must charge very high."

Some long stakes were yet wanting. At length their purchases were completed, and they searched about for a fitting situation.

"Let us keep a little in the back-ground," said Démar; "for I rather think we ought to have a license from the mayor."

"Yes, but if we are not seen, we shan't make a halfpenny."

"What harm can there be in showing a monster who is quite tame? Ah! here is just the place we want: let us build our house here."

The stakes were stuck in the ground; their stuff was cut in several pieces and stretched from top to bottom. At length a hut, such as it was, was constructed. Ten people might contrive to crowd them-

selves into it at a time. Two of the strongest stakes were placed together for Gervais to lean against. There was no other light inside than that which made its way through the stuff, which was very little; but the young people flattered themselves that the obscurity would only stimulate the curiosity of their visitors. Gervais was muffled up as on the preceding evening; and as he would not consent to stand on his head an hour beforehand, it was settled that Démar should not let any body in without clapping his hands, that his comrades might be prepared.

Everything being ready, Démar crept under the curtain, and with a long stick in his hand endeavoured to attract the curious, by crying, "Step in, and see this most extraordinary and supernatural being!—a man with two heads, one above and the other below his body! Step in, ladies and gentlemen, this most wonderful monster is alive, and talks—and what is still more surprising, he prefers speaking with his lower head! Step in, there is still room for a few. We only charge ten sous each person, and children under two years old half price."

Some few idlers approached the hut, but no one thought of entering. Démar roared still louder; but there was no picture of his monster to catch the eyes of the passengers, and they withdrew, saying, "A pretty show, indeed! not even a painting outside."

"We don't seem to get on," said Jean to Gervais, who was obliged to lie on the ground, his feet being entangled in the great coat.

"Step in, gentlemen, step in!" said Démar to some countrymen, who stopped to listen to him.

"What do you say is your charge for seeing your monster?" said one of them.

"Only ten sous each person, not a farthing more."

"Ten sous! ah! only ten sous! We have seen apes, and serpents, and bears, for only two sous."

"I dare say, gentleman; but a man with two heads!"

"It is impossible he can be a finer sight than a bear."

The peasants wandered on, and Jean bawled out from under the curtain, "Démar, lower your price, you fool, don't you see no one will come in. Let them see Gervais for five sous."

"Démar perceived some gapers approaching: he launched out in the customary strain, and concluded by saying, "We shall show our man with two heads at five sous to-day, because we have had such a crowd; but to-morrow, when we can't expect so many, we must charge double; for our expences are great, particularly for our monster, who has a devil of an appetite, and eats with both mouths."

An old countryman and his wife lingered about the show, and seemed strongly tempted.

"I have never seen a monster," said the man. "I should like to see one before I die. It must be a rare sight."

"A man with two heads!" said the woman, "that is really wonderful; and you say, sir, that one is above and the other below."

"Exactly."

"The one above how is it placed?"

"Just like ours."

"And the one below, where is that?"

"Ah, that is the most wonderful! Go in, and you will see."

"Let us go in, wife."

"Wait a minute; is your monster mischievous?"

"As quiet as a lamb; he will even sing a song if the company desire it."

"Come on, then, how much is it?"

"Ten sous for the two."

"That is very dear."

"That is the lowest."

"Must we pay before we see it?"

"Of course."

"Well, husband, what do you say?"

"Oh yes, let us see it: it must be a fine sight, and it will be something to talk of at home."

The old man gave his ten sous to Démar, saying, "Where do we go in? I don't see any door."

"You go in below: the cloth lifts up: but wait till I have given the signal: our monster may be asleep, perhaps, and then you will see nothing; for when he is asleep he puts his heads under his shoulders like a canary bird."

Démar clapped his hands. Jean immediately placed Gervais heels uppermost, and ascertained that the pasteboard head was firm. At this instant the clown and his wife crept in beneath the curtain and were obliged to rub their eyes to see at all.

"Oh my God! where are we? I can't see anything," said the woman.

"Walk in, ladies and gentlemen, walk in: here is the man with the two heads just before you," said Jean, standing between them and Gervais."

"Now I begin to see a little — stay, stay, wife, there is the monster."

"Oh, there he is! Bless me! what a frightful head the top one is! how he fixes his eyes!"

"Look at the lower one," said Jean, "it is much the handsomest, and he has more the use of that one."

"Don't he speak? make him speak a little."

"Speak," said Jean, striking Gervais on the belly.

"I am choking," said he, and his face turned quite red.

"What does he say, sir?"

"He says you are an extremely good looking woman."

"How odd! how sensibly he talks!"

"They said he sung," said the old man. "Ask him to sing a little song."

"Will you sing?" said Jean, stooping down to Gervais.

"Confound you," said he, "I can bear this no longer: I must get up. Turn out these fools."

"Get out as quick as you can," said Jean, pushing the old couple, "he says he can't answer for himself; he feels such a desire to make a meal of you."

"Ah, My God! come away, come away, husband."

The two villagers went down on all fours to creep under the curtain; Jean gave them a parting kick, and Gervais, no longer able to preserve his painful situation, came tumbling down.

As the old couple crawled out of the hut in the greatest terror, Démar was harranguing a group of loungers. He ran to help them on their feet saying, "Isn't it curious? Isn't it your money's worth?"

"Oh yes," said the country-woman, getting up; "Yes, sure, it is well worth seeing. And your monster, that you told us was as quiet as a lamb, gave us such a fright."

"It is wonderful, very wonderful indeed," said the husband, "but I would not go back again for a trifle."

"Why not?"

"Ask your showman what your man with the two heads wanted to do with us. If we had not taken to our heels, he would have swallowed us both: nothing less, I assure you."

"Let us get on, I don't feel quite safe with nothing but this curtain between us," said the woman, dragging her husband by the arm. The old couple walked off saying, "At all events we had a rare fright for our ten sous."

The by-standers, who had overheard a part of what was said, became rather curious to see this terrible being. They consulted, but could not bring themselves to pay five sous. As there were four of them, Démar consented to let them all in for twelve. Démar gave the signal and then ushered in the party.

When they had gained their legs they began grumbling at the darkness. "Why did not you light up your monster?" said one of them to Jean, "do you think you can humbug us with cats for tigers?"

Jean made no reply, but arranged his company as far off from Gervais as possible, saying, "Here you see the man with the two heads, gentlemen. I beg you will particularly observe the lower one; that is the most wonderful one."

The countrymen looked very suspiciously at Gervais. At last one said to Jean, "Why, does not your man move either the mouth or the eyes of his upper head?"

"He was born so, gentlemen. I can say nothing more; I did not make him."

"Ah, ah," said another, approaching Gervais, "I begin to suspect this is nothing but ——"

Jean tried to pull him back, saying, "Don't go so near him, he bites sometimes."

"They want to rob us of our money, this is no more a head ——"

Whilst this was going on, Gervais whispered "Send them away, send them away, Jean, I can't bear it."

But the villagers had no idea of being dismissed in that way, and as Jean was doing his best to prevent their touching the pasteboard head, Gervais fell heavily on the ground, and the false head, wig and all, came rolling among the villagers.

"Ah, do you see this, here is a pretty trick," said the countrymen.

Jean, seeing that the game was up, slipped under the curtain, whilst the countrymen kicked Gervais about, saying, "You little rascal, we will teach you to play the monster to rob us of our money in this way."

Gervais did his best to disentangle his feet. The countrymen did their best in the meantime, and paid no attention to his cries and tears.

When Jean got out, he looked about for Démar to help Gervais, but he was no where to be found. Seeing no other means of help, he pulled up the large stakes which supported the show, and it all came tumbling down. Fortunately he saw part of Gervais's dress; he dragged him out by the legs, and they took to flight together across the fields.

CHAPTER IX.

We run well during our happy days of prisoner's-bars, and leap-frog. Jean and Gervais had left Coulommiers behind them before the lubberly villagers had cleared themselves from the ruins of the show.

Jean wished to stop, but Gervais still ran on; fear had given him wings. In turning out of a little lane, they saw some one running before them.

"Stop," said Gervais, "It is some one after us."

"No," said Jean, "It is Démar; there is no mistaking him."

And Demar it was. At the first angry word, he had taken to his heels, leaving his companions to shift as well as they could."

"A pretty fellow you are," said Jean, "to leave us to our fate in this way."

"Why did you not play your parts better?"

"It was Gervais's fault. He would not keep on his head."

"Do you think any person could stand in that way for ever? and then, to be beaten inthe way I was! If ever I play the monster again——"

"The fact was, I ran away, because I had taken the money, and I was afraid they would make me give it back again."

"By the bye, how much did you get in all?"

"Two-and-twenty sous."

"A pretty sum, indeed! Why, we gave more for that rascally wig. I told you we should never cover the expence — and all that cloth which we have left to the countrymen!"

"It was your fault, Jean, with your nonsense about rare shows!"

"Well, boys, we must hope for more luck in future."

"Yes, but don't reckon on my playing the beast again," said Gervais, rubbing his shoulders. "Come, let us get on, we are rather blown here."

The young men walked on at a good pace, and never stopped till they reached the little village of Boissy-le-Châtel, where they rested but a short time, feeling themselves still too near the good town of Coulommiers. They no longer played on the road, for Gervais's bones ached, Démar was thoughtful, and Jean said to himself, "Ah, how well off I was at home! My father shut me up, certainly; but I deserved it for getting tipsy, and my poor mother would not have left me on bread and water long."

They arrived at the little town of Rebais, and did not trouble themselves to look out for a first-rate inn. The morning's work had helped to empty their purse. Jean had only twenty francs remaining, which he declared he would make last fifteen days. Démar laughed in his face, and Gervais said, "In that case, no more partridges for us."

They entered a miserable ale house, where they supped on an omelette and some cheese, shared one

dirty bed in a garret between them, and the night was spent in quarrelling, instead of sleeping.

Next morning, after breakfast, Jean paid the bill; with all their managment, it amounted to seven francs. Jean said to his companions, "You see, with all our economy, twenty francs wont go far."

"Well, then," said Gervais, "we may as well have one more good dinner."

Démar said nothing: he was watching a traveller who had just then entered the room, with a well-stuffed valise under his arm, which he threw on a form near the table, at which he seated himself. Every thing about him showed that he was one without guile. He had scarcely entered, when he began talking with every body about himself and his own affairs.

"Come," said Jean, "what is the use of staying here?"

"I am rather tired," said Démar, "we are in no hurry; let us wait awhile; we may be the better for it."

"How?"

Démar would not say more, but threw himself on a form, and began smoking. Jean and Gervais walked out into a little garden at the back of the house, where chairs and tables were placed under the trees for those who wished to drink in the open air. In about a quarter of an hour they were joined by Démar who appeared very much agitated, and cast a suspicious glance about him from time to time.

"What the devil have you been about," said Jean, who was struck with his look.

"A little liberty," said Démar, in a low voice, looking over his shoulder.

"What do you mean?"

"Hush, speak low; I have not been idle, I assure you. I have played that silly traveller the best trick you ever saw—I thought there was a garden door; but I don't see it."

"Well, we can go out through the house; come."

"No, no; wait," said Démar, stopping Jean, who had turned towards the house; "I want to avoid going that way. If this idiot should have perceived —— but he is at breakfast, and I hope ——"

"What have you done? Why do you shake so? Speak."

"We are lucky fellows; we have money enough. We may enjoy ourselves for a long time now. Here, do you see this pocket-book?"

"Good God!" said Jean, whose mind misgave him, "Tell me whose is this?"

"It belonged to that traveller who was prating there to every body. When you left the room, I sat down by him, and we drank a bottle of wine and chatted together. The idiot opened his valise to show me the presents he had bought for his wife; he boasted that he had touched a thousand crowns at Coulommiers. Then he took out his pocket-book to look for an address, and after fastening it, he intended to return it to his pocket, but it slipped under the table. I immediately covered it with my foot, and began to admire his purchases in order to take off his attention, and watching the opportunity, I picked it up without his noticing it: then bidding him good bye, I left him at table."

"Wretched boy! why this is a robbery," said Jean indignantly.

"No, you can't call it a robbery—if a blockhead drops a pocket-book—"

"You saw him drop it, and you ought to have returned it to him."

"I am not quite such a fool as that, eh! Gervais?"

"Why," said Gervais, "in fact—if a pocket-book is on the ground, I don't see why one should not ——"

"I say, Démar, you must return it. If you keep it you are a rogue, and will never have any luck. You call it a little liberty taking a traveller's pocket-book!"

"I did not take it, I only picked it up."

"You must return it, I tell you. If this man should perceive his loss—if it should be found on you —— Good God! we should be taken up as thieves."

"Nonsense, nonsense! You look at every thing so gloomily. I will keep what I have got."

"Well, then, I'll go —— Good heaven! it is too late! look, they are coming to take us."

Démar and Gervais turned, and could just see through the trees three *gensdarmes*, who came into the garden, and stopping at the top of a walk, seemed looking about them.

Démar was petrified, he became as pale as death, and was unable to move a foot. Gervais instinctively sought refuge under a table, and Jean, who shuddered at the very idea of being taken as the accomplice of a robber, withdrew precipitately from his companions and reached the bottom of the garden; without bestowing a moment's reflection how his flight might be construed, he vaulted lightly over a wall about four feet high. Finding himself in the fields, he ran right a-head without once stopping or looking behind him.

At length his legs failed him; he halted and looked around. On his left was a public road; behind and before him open fields; and a little wood on the right. He listened; all was quiet. A few labourers

in the fields were the only animated beings in the picture. There was no appearance of pursuit; yet, in every stroke of the flail, he thought he heard a step of a grenadier. He trembled, though innocent! What would have been his feelings had he been guilty!

Jean hurried into the little wood on his right, and throwing himself at the foot of a tree, he reflected on what Démar had done. "I was in the right in quitting them; for Démar is a thief, and I will never be the friend of a thief. Gervais is as bad; he was for keeping the pocket-book. No doubt they are taken up by this time. Those *gensdarmes* must have arrested them. Suppose they said it was I who planned this robbery; it would be just like Démar. Perhaps they are even now in search of me. Who would believe me when I said I wished to restore the money? My unhappy parents! what would they say to their son's being brought back to Paris as a robber? Ah, how sorry I am I ever knew Démar or Gervais. My father said they were good for nothing, and he was right; he knew them better than I did, though I saw them so much oftener."

Immersed in these melancholy reflections, Jean threw himself on the grass; he yielded gradually to the influence of fatigue; his eyes closed, and he soon slept soundly.

When he awoke it was dark night. He rubbed his eyes, but could distinguish nothing, and he could not recollect where he was. Groping about, however, he found the trees which had been his shelter and soon called to mind the events of the day. He was soon reminded also that he had eaten nothing since the morning. He arose, saying, "I must be jogging; I shall never find anything to eat in this wood.

He was completely ignorant of where he was; he

did not even recollect on which side he entered the wood or which was his way out. Jean was no coward, however; the darkness and solitude caused him no alarm whatever. He dreaded nothing but the shame of being arrested as the accomplice of a robber and his fear was that he might ignorantly retrace his steps to the spot he had so lately fled.

However there was no remaining where he was; a stomach sixteen years and a half old is not easily reconciled to a fast of twelve hours. Jean determined to trust to chance. He advanced holding out his hands to avoid the brambles, making in the direction where there was the most light, and hoping he might soon stumble on some path-way.

After walking some time, he, to his great joy, found a path which he had not followed more than two hundred yards when a light struck his eyes. His heart beat at the sight and he redoubled his steps towards this pleasing object, which he soon found, proceeded from the window of a small cottage.

Jean paused at the door, "I may safely knock," said he, "It's some countryman's house, who will surely give me a supper and perhaps a bed if I pay him, and I am still worth thirteen francs. I had much rather sleep here than in a village. I shall be quieter, and run no risk of meeting those cursed *gensdarmes*, the very thought of whom makes me shudder. I'll knock."

Jean found the door, and knocked gently. He soon heard a footstep, and a child's voice cried, "Is that you Jean?"

The young traveller was not a little surprised. An indefinite sensation seized him at hearing his own name pronounced in the dead of the night by an unknown voice. Nevertheless, there was something so sweet

in the tone, that, yielding almost unconsciously to a natural feeling, he answered, "Yes, it's I."

The door was opened, and a little boy seven or eight years of age, with a pleasing face and interesting appearance, cried, "Ah! it is not Jean."

However, our traveller made his way into a room very meanly furnished, where a villager of some fifty years of age was seated near a table, having one of his legs raised on a stool.

"Who is it, then?" said he, turning his eyes toward the door.

"Sir," said Jean, stepping forward, "I have lost myself in the wood. A stranger in the country, I am looking out for some house, where I can learn my way, and where I may get some supper, for I am extremely hungry—but I have wherewith to pay."

The cottager smiled at Jean, whose youth and frank manner pleased him.

"And if you could not pay," said he, "do you think I would refuse you a crust of bread? I am not rich, but I dont want the will."

"No, we are not rich," said the little boy, "especially since our poor cow died."

"Be quiet, Jacques. Come in, young man; sit down and rest yourself. I will give you what I have. We shall have something better presently, for I expect my eldest son every moment; I thought it had been him who knocked. He is called Jean."

"So am I, sir."

"Ah, you are namesakes then; that is another reason why you should sup with us."

Jean seated himself at the table. Little Jacques put some brown bread and some cheese before him, and looked at him with the greatest curiosity. Whilst Jean was eating, the old man asked him some questions.

"Are you going far, young man?"

"To Paris, sir."

"Thirteen leagues off. And you have left your father?"

"No; on the contrary, I am going to see him."

"You have been on a visit to some relation, then?"

"Yes, sir."

"At Rebais, most likely?"

"No," replied Jean, "I have never been there. Is it far from this?"

"Not quite two miles."

"Good God!" said Jean to himself, "Am I no farther than that?"

"Is it long since you have seen your father?"

"Not quite two months."

"You must be very impatient to join him. Two months is a very long time to be separated from one's parents. They must be looking out for you every day."

Jean dropped his eyes, and stammered out, "Yes, they are expecting me."

The little boy, running to his father, said, "I will never leave you, shall I?"

"No, child, you shall always live with me, like your brother Jean; you are the support of your poor father."

"I am not yet strong enough to work in the fields; but I shall soon be able to dress the dinner, and you will see what capital soup I'll make; you must not be moving about with your bad leg."

The cottager kissed his son. Jean put down the bread he held in his hand. His heart was too full for him to eat.

"Come, you are not eating. The bread is none

of the finest, certainly ; but we shall sup presently. Ah, there is a knock. No doubt it is my son."

The little boy ran to open the door, and cried joyfully, " yes, it's brother Jean."

A young man about eighteen years of age, strong and well put together, but rather sun-burnt, entered the cottage, holding in the one hand his tools, and in the other a basket. He ran to embrace his father, and drawing from his pocket a piece of five francs and some change, he put the whole into the old man's hands, saying, " Here, I have just received my week's wages. My master is very well pleased with me, and has promised to raise my day's pay."

" But you keep nothing for yourself, Jean," said the cottager.

" What do I want with money ? don't I sup every evening with you, and take my dinner with me in the morning ? I am only sorry I can't earn more. You should have it all, father."

" Yes, and we might then buy another cow," said little Jacques.

" Come, come, let us to supper, my children. Here, my son, is a young man who will join us. He is on his way to Paris, to his parents."

" Yes," said Jean, heaving a deep sigh, " I wish I was a little nearer home. But, after all, thirteen leagues is no great way ; I can walk it in a day."

The provisions which the young labourer had brought were placed on the table. The father seated himself between his two sons, and Jean's feelings were quite overcome when he witnessed the love which subsisted between the members of this little family.

" As I passed through Rebais this morning," said the eldest son, " I saw a rogue taken up."

Jean trembled; it could only have been one of his companions.

"What had the rogue done?" said the cottager.

"Fired a farm-house."

"The wretch!"

"They had been on his track for some time, and the *gensdarmes* came up with him at Rebais; I saw them bring him out."

"You saw him," said Jean, "what sort of a man was he?"

"Why, very ill-looking, and about forty years of age."

"And was he taken alone?"

"Yes, for it appeared he had no accomplices."

Jean breathed more freely. He could not endure the thought that his old friends were in the hands of justice. When supper was over, "If you wish to sleep here," said the father of the family, "you will have rather a hard bed, to be sure; but then it's my children's which you must take a part of. I was better off once; we have had our share of misfortune. The loss of my wife — my good Marie! — I became paralytic in this leg, which prevents my working. Our cow, too, is dead, which was a great help. But I cannot complain since my sons are left: and you see how they love me. They will never quit their father — will you, my children?"

"Oh, never, never!" said both the sons, throwing themselves in their father's arms; "is not it both a duty and a pleasure to stay with you?"

"And who would support you," said little Jacques, "now that you are scarcely able to move, if we were to leave you? A pretty thing it would be to see our father leaning on a stranger!"

The tears stood in the old man's eyes as he looked on his children, and Jean could no longer restrain his.

At length they all felt the want of repose. The inhabitants of the cottage threw themselves on their beds. Jean shared that of the eldest son; but sleep fled his eyes. Too many painful thoughts crowded on his mind, and his heart was full. He reproached himself with his flight, and pictured the grief which his parents must have felt at the sad return he had made for all their kindness. How different had his conduct been to that of this poor labourer's children; and how far removed from their sentiments were those of his late companions! All these ideas pained and troubled him, and looking on the young peasant who slept peaceably by his side, he said, "Once again with my mother, and my sleep will be as sweet as his."

The day soon broke, and the inmates of the cottage were on foot. They breakfasted. The eldest son took some bread and his tools, and embracing his father, went to his work. Jean learned the road to Paris. Before leaving, he wished to give all he had to the master of the cottage; but he could not prevail upon him to take much. Little Jacques was sent to show him his road, and when they reached the highway, Jean put some money into his hand, saying, "Give this to your father; it will help to buy you another cow. I shall want but little more for I shall reach home to-night. At all events I do not deserve to be trusted with money."

The little fellow jumped with joy, and ran back, saying, "We shall have another cow!"

Jean, better pleased with himself than he had been the evening before, went gaily on, asking his way from time to time. He walked six leagues without stopping; then rested himself in an alehouse, where he spent the ten sous he had kept for his journey. He had still seven leagues before him,

but he had good legs and a stout heart. He had no little difficulty, however, in reaching Paris, where he arrived at last, and took the road leading to his *quartier*.

Night had long closed in before Jean had reached the Rue St. Paul. His trouble and embarrassment redoubled as he approached his parents' house. He stopped, saying, "Should they not receive me kindly —or send me back!" All at once he thought of his godfather, Bellequeue, who had always been peace-maker between him and his father, and on whose extreme indulgence he knew he could rely. "I'll go and seek him," said he; "he will forgive me; he will see my mother, and appease my father's anger."

Delighted at this idea, Jean went and knocked at the house where his godfather lodged.

CHAPTER X.

EVER since Bellequeue had deserted the fine arts (for now-a-days every one is an *artiste*), he had taken a neat lodging and a pretty little servant girl about eighteen, which arrangement, we may just hint, Mme. Durand did not exactly approve of. Bellequeue was still a bachelor; and, although he advised all his friends to marry, he had not thought proper to set them the example. Despite all his fopperies and polite attentions to the ladies, he had contrived to scrape together some thousand crowns a-year, quite enough for a single man, even though he has a young housekeeper. Notwithstanding he hovered on his fifty third year, he was in high preservation. His complexion, to be sure, was a little more decided, particularly in the neighbourhood of his nose: his teeth were still white; his hair, which was always dressed in the same fashion, was most elaborately curled, and he never used any but the finest pomatum and scented powder. Altogether he made a capital turnout; and his three-cornered hat was as black and shining as his boots, which were highly polished with

English blacking. Bellequeue might therefore play his part with the sex without exciting any ridicule. But if he squired the ladies of the Quartier St. Antoine, he was extremely correct in his conduct, and was always at home by eleven o'clock. Some said, indeed, that his little housekeeper took upon herself to scold him if ever he deviated from this good practice.

This young woman, whose name was Rose, was a lively brunette; her little eyes glittered again, and her nose, which the neighbours said was cocked, but which her master assured her was *à la Roxalane*, gave her a comic look, which was by no means disagreeable. Mlle. Rose was dressed more like a lady's maid, than a housekeeper to a respectable old gentleman. She sported pretty bonnets handsomely trimmed, and black silk aprons. Her stays were made by a first-rate hand, and she affected a little mincing step and gait, which by no means misbecame her; no wonder the evil tongues of the neighbourhood were on the alert. It was said that she lived with M. Bellequeue as *maid of all work*, having advertised for such a situation in *les Petites Affiches*. They had quizzed the old boy, and had gone so far as to tell him that no man, with any regard for his character, would take a servant of only eighteen, and particularly such a flirt as Mlle. Rose. Bellequeue had turned a deaf ear to all this; he thought that in the autumn of life, a man may be excused if he pleases himself. One might manage as well with a servant of eighteen, as with an old woman of fifty. It is so much more agreeable on returning home, to see a smiling face than an old crone: and a servant well dressed, does credit to her master; and, after all, she was to live with him and not with his neighbours. In a word, he engaged the girl; and I think he was perfectly right.

Bellequeue had just returned home, taken off his black coat, and slipped on his dressing gown, and was beginning a game at draughts with Rose—a game which was quite new to the young thing, but her master was very patient and taught her the moves. He was about to crown a man, when the bell rang violently.

"Upon my word," said Rose, "they make free enough, to ring in that way!"

"They don't seem to stand on ceremony, certainly," said Bellequeue. "Go and see Rose — don't forget that I was going to crown."

"I'll settle these ringers," said Rose.

But there was no time for scolding; Rose had scarce opened the door, when Jean rushed in, and upsetting a chair and table, made his way into Bellequeue's room, and threw himself into his arms before he well knew who was coming.

"Here I am, godfather," cried Jean.

"Ah, good God! it's he — it's you, my dear Jean. Hug me, you sad dog. Here, he is returned. I always said he would come back, and sure enough he has. The prodigal son has returned; and we must kill the fatted calf. Kiss me once more, my boy."

Bellequeue again pressed his godson in his arms. Mlle. Rose looked at Jean complacently, whom she knew very well, having lived upwards of a year with Bellequeue.

However, Jean, who was half dead with fatigue, withdrew from his godfather's arms, and sinking into a chair, said "Oh, I can no more."

"You certainly look very much tired, my boy."

"Monsieur Jean is covered with dust," said Rose.

"Did you come far?"

"Thirteen leagues to-day."

"Thirteen leagues! why it is a forced march. But not all the way on foot, I hope."

"I ran nearly the whole way."

"My poor boy! But how he has grown, and how well he looks! does not he, Rose?"

"Certainly, Monsieur Jean is grown quite a man."

"But won't you take something?"

"Willingly, for I am dying with hunger and thirst."

"And you don't speak. Run, Rose, quick; and bring what you have — all that's left from dinner. Stay, I'll go myself; you shall have a bottle of my best old wine."

Mademoiselle ran one way, and Bellequeue another. In a moment a table was laid, and covered with cold meat, fruits, and bottles. Bellequeue himself filled to his godson; he sat down at table, and hob-nobbed with him.

"Here is to your health and happy return, Jean."

"Thank you, godfather, but tell me of my parents; tell me of my mother. They must have been very angry with me, wer'n't they? I feel now, that I was very wrong; but I have been well punished for my folly. My friends were bad characters, very bad characters indeed. I know it now, but I did not think so then."

"From the moment you admit you are wrong, all ought to be forgiven," said Bellequeue. "We will drink the oblivion of your fault."

"Yes, godfather."

"Take care, sir," said Rose, pulling her master by the skirts of his coat, "you will make yourself ill. Recollect that you have already dined."

"Be quiet Rose, I will be careful. But I am so pleased with Jean's return. Ah, you were wrong, very wrong, my boy — you've grown full two inches I think. If you had breathed a hint of what you

were about before you went — how much travel improves young people : Eh, Rose, he has quite got rid of his childish manner."

"And my mother, is she well ?" said Jean.

"Very well, my friend : how delighted she will be ! how she will kiss and hug you ! Never a day passes without her talking about you."

"And my father, do you think he will scold me much ? you must see him first, and speak for me."

Bellequeue made no reply ; he exchanged looks with Rose, and his brow became clouded.

"You don't answer me," said Jean. "Won't my father see me ? Won't he forgive me, do you think ?"

"It is not that, my friend," said Bellequeue, in an embarrassed manner. "But I thought you knew — since your departure — several things have happened — do you know you will have been away two months to-morrow ?"

"Well, what has happened ?"

"My boy, in this world we should be prepared for every thing, and then we should be astonished at nothing."

"Come—my father ! What has happened to him ?"

"He has been dead upwards of a month."

"Dead ! ah ! good God ! and perhaps I was the cause of it ?"

"No, no ; compose yourself, my dear boy. Your father loved you, but he took your absence much more philosophically than your mother, and every day he comforted her by saying, 'My son will rue the day he left us. He will bite the bridle, which will do him all the good in the world, and I have no doubt he will come back a very altered character.' But about a month ago he was carried off by an apoplectic stroke, although he was in the habit of drinking something every morning to guard against such little accidents."

"I shall never forgive myself for not having been with him in his last moments! Now I feel the full punishment of my fault; but the blow is hard to bear."

"Come, Jean, cheer up: of course we must expect you to cry after your poor father. It would be wrong if you did not, would'nt it Rose? Eh! why you are crying too."

"Yes, sir, I can't bear to see Monsieur Jean cry."

"I don't doubt it; in fact, if I gave way to it, I should cry myself; but I must be firm — I must command my feelings, for I must console Mme. Durand, when I return her son to her."

"You are right, godfather, let us go to my mother."

Bellequeue put on his coat again, and went out with Jean, who would not longer delay an interview with his mother. They soon arrived. It being very late, the shop was shut. Catherine opened the door. She screamed at the sight of her young master; and though they tried to stop her, she ran up stairs, crying, "Here, Madame! here, here is M. Jean come back! M. Bellequeue has brought him back."

Seeing nothing else for it, Jean followed close on Catherine's heels, and was soon in his mother's arms.

"There," said Bellequeue, "did not I tell you I would bring him back again. He is quite a new man. Oh, you will find him very steady in future. He has promised me to be so."

Mme. Durand did not require this assurance to forgive her son. Jean, in pouring forth his grief for the loss of his father, did not spare himself.

At length, when the first moments sacred to sorrow and tenderness had passed, they begged the fugitive to recount his adventures. Late as it was, M. Bellequeue would not stir till he had heard the recital.

Jean kept back nothing, except Démar's robbery, which had decided him on quitting his companions. He could not so utterly cast off his old comrades as to reveal a crime which, if known, would utterly disgrace their parents. "We quarrelled," said he, "and I left them. For a long time I had felt that I ought to return to you."

They asked no questions. They believed him, and embraced him again, and after having reinstated his godson in the house of his father, Bellequeue returned home, delighted with himself, and all the world.

The next morning, early, Jean went alone to his father's grave, and his mother, at his return, kissed him, saying, "I always said his heart was in its right place."

Young Durand's relations soon heard of his return. But no one came to congratulate the mother; for having blamed her for her extreme weakness, she had quarrelled with them all.

"We shall soon hear of some new scrape," said the Renards. "He will never be steady," said Fourreau. Mlle. Aglaë predicted he would never be a lady's man; and as to Mistigris, he said, "What can you expect from a man who can't dance?"

Mme. Durand troubled her head very little about her relatives. Her son was returned; that was enough for her.

For some time Jean was very quiet, and stirred very little from his mother's side. The tender mother, somewhat alarmed at his extreme steadiness, began to fear he would fall ill; and was the first to suggest his amusing himself something more. On his side, Jean persuaded his mother to give up business, and to enjoy the quiet to which she was so well entitled. As her son had determined never to be an herbalist,

Mme. Durand complied with his wishes. Thanks to Bellequeue, who took all the trouble on himself, the stock and shop were well sold.

The herbalist had conducted his trade well, and the year after the death of her husband, Mme. Durand retired from business, with a fortune of six thousand francs a-year.

Jean having been left nearly as much by his godmother, Mme. Durand said to every body, "My son will one day be worth twelve thousand francs a-year; with that and his figure, he will be fit for a duchess."

Jean, who was nearly eighteen years of age, was really a good-looking fellow. But, though tall and well made, he was totally devoid of manner. Spending most of his time in smoking-rooms and cafés, and preferring the company of a little grisette, to that of a well-educated woman, Jean showed but too plainly the society he frequented. He was not altogether vulgar, but his tone was loud and his manner abrupt. He could neither turn a compliment, nor had he any small talk for the ladies. Every now and then a most energetic oath escaped him, and not bestowing any pains on himself, he said, "They must take me just as I am;" to which the fond mother would reply, "You are good enough for any body, my son."

Jean certainly could not be accused of coxcombry, and detesting it in others, had no patience with a man who stood admiring himself in a glass. Bellequeue would sometimes say, "But, my friend, one may be a little particular in one's dress without being a fop. One should show taste in every thing, and there is room for it in the arrangement of the hair. Besides, there is no coxcombry in getting one's clothes made by a good tailor."

"Nonsense," said Jean, "if a man is clean, that is all that is necessary."

As Jean knew nothing of literature, or the fine arts, or any pleasing accomplishment, and was perfectly ignorant of all useful knowledge, he was fain to say, "What the devil need a man who has twelve thousand francs a-year, care for all this stuff?" Poor Mme. Durand would chime in, "No, certainly, my dear boy. Besides, you are clever enough to take your share in conversation, without having studied these things."

On the other hand, Jean was a capital billiard-player, an amusement at which he spent the greatest part of his time, and he could drink his share without its having any effect on him. He kept himself in practice at the *traiteur's*, with several young people of his own age, and sometimes he persuaded Bellequeue to come and smoke a pipe or a cigar with him. He seldom went to the play, for he could not stay long in one place. As to paying court to any lady, that was quite out of the question; but he liked laughing and romping with little grisettes, feeling quite at his ease in such company.

Bellequeue took every opportunity of trying to give him a little polish: "You have a capital voice," said he, "but you don't manage it well. You learn nothing but drinking-songs, and you sing too boisterously. You pull your hat quite over your eyes, and you have a most shocking tie. You are upright enough, but you walk too stiffly."

"Liberty, godfather, liberty is every thing with me."

"To be sure, my boy, it is all very well to do nothing but what pleases ourselves, but that does not prevent one from curling one's hair: and you may just as well please to sing pretty little airs, as to roar out your drinking-songs, which make the glasses rattle again."

"Oh, it is so sickening to hear those tiresome songs, which set every body asleep—to see a fellow with a lack-a-daisical air, and turning up the whites of his eyes —"

"The women like it, Jean."

"I am sorry for it; for I shall never please them then. I must do it naturally, or not at all—but it's all one to me."

"If you were in love, you would not say so."

"In love! I'll take very good care never to make a fool of myself. Besides, I can tell you I have already been in love three or four times; but do you think I stood sighing and groaning and making compliments? No; when a girl strikes me I go up to her at once, and say, 'Curse me, but you are a devilish pretty girl—upon my soul, I admire you very much.' One runs away, and I let her run: another laughs, and we soon understand one another."

"Yes, but you have always made up to little milliners' apprentices."

"Well, and I suppose they are as much women as any others."

"Yes, but they are women who don't require much courting."

"If they did, they would not do for me."

"And you call that being in love, my poor boy?"

"To be sure I do; is not it?"

"Not at all; it's a very different affair."

"Whether or no, I shall never be otherwise."

Bellequeue, on his return home, would say to Rose, "Jean is a good looking lad; brave, honest, and well made. What a pity that he will not rub off a little of his roughness; that's all he wants. If he would only study my manner of addressing a lady—of offering her my arm —"

"M. Jean is very well as he is," replied Rose.

"His loud voice agrees very well with his candid manner; there is nothing unpleasant in his roughness. He is handsome, and does not seem to know it, which does not render him the less pleasing. Ah! if he listened to you, indeed,—you are a pretty example, making up to every woman, smiling to one, offering your arm to another—"

"Oh, Rose, that is going too far. I am polite; I come into a room well—that is all."

"Yes, yes, I know all your politeness, sir. You know every woman in the neighbourhood—always bowing to them. Leave M. Jean alone. He will learn to coax and deceive soon enough."

Bellequeue made no reply; but he smiled at himself in the glass, saying, "how devilish jealous she is become!"

CHAPTER XI.

Time flew. Jean had passed his nineteenth year. He was intimate with several young men, but he considered them only as acquaintances. Démar and Gervais had taught him not to bestow his friendship lightly. Nevertheless Jean was often the dupe of a good heart. They borrowed his money, and he knew not how to refuse them. He was ever open to a melancholy tale, and emptied his purse into the hands of those whom he believed to be unfortunate.

But those who borrowed never offered to repay him. If he reminded any one of his debt he never saw him again; and more than once he encountered at a *café* or *traiteur's*, seated merrily over a bowl of punch or a bottle of Champagne, the half-starved wretch to whom he had given his purse in the morning. Jean was disgusted with mankind, and brought his complaints to Bellequeue, who would say, "My dear friend, you are too quick in every thing. You follow the first impression; whereas the world will soon teach you that you cannot yield to a second or even a third without being often the dupe of appearances."

"What the devil do you mean by impressions?" said he. "A man of my acquaintance tells me, he wants money: he applies to me, because he knows I have it. I give it to him; because I am able. All this appears very natural, and it turns out that I have had to do with a rascal, who swindles and laughs at me. How was I to know that? If I come across him, I will break my stick over his back."

"Yes, and get sent to jail."

"What, then, must I suffer myself to be robbed, and say nothing?"

"No; but we must not give way to the first impression of anger. We must put our documents into the hands of a solicitor."

"What do you mean by documents?"

"I mean the papers which prove the debt."

"Papers! what papers, have I. When I lend five hundred francs to a friend, am I to say, 'have the goodness to write a promissory note — most likely you are a swindler, and don't mean to pay me.'"

"You see, however, my boy, that in dealing with the world some little precautions are necessary."

"The world! the world seems prettily made up! I should be a great fool to give myself any trouble about it."

"My son, all the bows, all the smiles, all the exchange of politeness which we daily witness, do not express that we esteem or look up to those whom we address: quite otherwise. They mean; 'I am as knowing as you are—well acquainted with and accustomed to the world, and you will find it no easy matter to take me in.'"

"That is to say, we are to be as great deceivers and liars as others. None of your knowledge of the world for me! I shall always say what comes into my head; turn my back on those who bore me, and show

to those who lie that I do not believe them. Liberty, godfather, liberty is the thing."

"I admire it as much as you possibly can; but there are liberties which we must not take. There are certain limits; for example, if you see a man badly dressed, you must not let him see that you laugh at him; that would be very unpolite. If you feel a strong desire to laugh, and you cannot turn your head away, bite your lips gently, and smile in such a way that no one can take offence at it."

"For God's sake, let me alone, godfather. Do you think I would bite my lips in that way, to prevent me from laughing at an absurd blockhead."

"Such is the custom, however, I can assure you."

"To the devil with your customs! I am very well as I am: my mother thinks so; that's enough. Let those who don't, come and tell me so. I am their man at sword, pistol, stick, or fisty-cuffs."

"Oh, I know you are up to every thing in that way."

"Well then, come, let us get a cigar."

Jean, who was in the habit of calling at Bellequeue's three or four times a day, did not always find him within. But Mademoiselle Rose was sure to be there and received him very graciously. We have already learnt that the *brusquerie* and somewhat free manners of the young man were not objected to by the little housekeeper. Jean chatted with Rose who was far from a fool, and in talking, he would often take hold of her hand, then her arm, then her chin, or some thing else, to which she would pay little attention; as Jean's candid and open hearted way of setting about things left no room for offence.

One morning that Jean called, and his godfather was out, he seated himself near the little girl, and

said, "Rose, they say that I am rough and unpolished, do you think so?"

"By no means, Mr. Jean, I always found you quite the contrary. You are young and lively; it is all very natural. Besides, I hate your ceremonious people. Oh, how tiresome they are."

"They say I swear at every second word."

"What a falsehood; besides every man swears a little now and then. When one is agitated there is no refraining. I know some women who swear like troopers; but it is dreadful to hear a woman swear."

"They say also, that I stink of tobacco so that you may smell me a league off."

"Well, where's the harm of smelling of tobacco; they can say you smoke, that's all; for my part I like the smell."

"My godfather says I walk badly."

"Ah, I suppose he would wish you to hop about like himself."

"He says I neglect my person."

"Because, I suppose, you don't stand two hours before a glass as he does. You are very well dressed; I hate coxcombs.

"He says I am ignorant of the world—that I must learn to lie and grimace."

"Pretty advice, indeed! he would spoil all your natural good qualities. Don't mind him, M. Jean, a'n't you old enough to take care of yourself?"

"And he says I don't know how to make love to a woman, and that I shall never make any woman in love with me."

"Ah, ah, as if you could not please without him—without his——It's odd enough, if you——besides you are no longer a child—all that will come of itself."

Whether Mlle. Rose was aware that Jean liked her, or whether he wished to show her his way of making his court to the ladies, the conversation was prolonged for some time, and Jean had been a full hour at Bellequeue's when he returned. As he had a latch-key, he let himself in without ringing, and walked into the parlour where Jean was still chatting with the little housekeeper.

Bellequeue broke down in an attempt at his pleasing smile. It struck him that his godson and his little servant were seated more than sufficiently near to each other.

However, Jean ran gaily up to him, saying, "I was waiting for you."

"I see you were," said Bellequeue, biting his lips. "Have you been long — waiting?"

"M. Jean had just come in," said Rose.

"How can you say so, Rose!" said Jean, "I have been more than an hour here."

Rose blushed; she began to think that Jean was somewhat too frank, and that a little knowledge of the world would not be thrown away upon him.

"What were you talking about with Rose," said Bellequeue, after a moment's silence.

"M. Jean was telling me of his travels," said Rose.

"I — I did not tell you a word about it. I told you, you were an uncommonly pretty girl, Rose."

"Ah, in joke, sir."

"No, indeed, I was in downright earnest—and, godfather, I had just kissed her when you came in."

"No, sir, you did not kiss me."

"I didn't! that's a good one. Look, godfather, I caught hold of her just in this way."

"I see," said Bellequeue, pushing between Jean and Rose, "I can perfectly understand how. Rose, you may go to your kitchen."

Rose went out, stealing a look at Jean to give him a hint, but he paid no attention to it.

Bellequeue gathered himself up, and approaching Jean, said, "My dear friend, I have always tried to impress upon you, that appearances must be kept up, and that there were certain liberties which could not be taken ——"

"What liberties have I taken, godfather?"

"I have hired as housekeeper, a respectable, steady, young woman"—

"How pretty she is!"

"As to her being pretty, that is a matter of taste. She is quite flirt enough, that is very evident."

"Oh, I take! You are fond of her, and wish to keep her to yourself."

"I don't tell you any such thing. Provided she does her work well, that is all that I want. But I won't have you coming here idling and making her neglect her business."

"If you are not fond of her, why should you care about my being so?"

"Because appearances must be preserved."

"And I suppose appearances would not prevent you from kissing her from morning till night if you chose."

"I tell you she is a well-conducted, respectable, young woman."

"Well, then, you need not be afraid of her listening to me."

"Nevertheless, you, must not kiss her: that ought not to be."

"I felt as if it was very much as it ought to be."

"My dear Jean, I have already told you that you ought not to yield to your first impressions."

"And my dear godfather, I have already told you

that I laugh at your impressions, and that I will do just as I please. Will you come and smoke ?"

"No, I thank you, I have been out enough for one day."

Jean took leave, and Bellequeue remained alone. He mused, and did not seem in his usual good humour. Rose came over towards him, but he said nothing. She whisked about the room; she sang; but all to no purpose. At length she went up to him, and in her softest voice, and showing her beautiful white teeth at the same time, she said, "Will you play a game at draughts ?"

Rose knew her master well; already had his anger evaporated, and there was something in the smile of his little housekeeper, which he could not resist. However, he got up as grave a look as he could, and replied, "Rose I am very angry with you."

"What for ?" said Rose, innocently.

"Because you allowed Jean to take liberties with you."

"He took none, I assure you, sir. Do you believe M. Jean troubles his head about me ? he who never thinks of a woman at all.— Stay a moment, there is something wrong, let me settle this little curl. —Jean is a rattlepate, and thinks of nothing but laughing."

"Am I better, now, Rose ?"

"Oh you are quite a love; there is not a hair out of its place."

"Nevertheless, when my godson calls, and I am not within, he must be told ——"

"I know very well, sir, what he must be told. But what kept you so long this morning. You were at the perfumer's again ?"

"I just stept in for a moment."

"There! did not I say so? When my gentleman is there, there is no getting him away."

"Rose you are pulling my hair; you hurt me!"

"So much the better; it would serve you right to pull every hair out of your head; it would teach you to be less gallant in future."

"What a delightful creature it is," said Bellequeue, placing himself before the draught-board. "However it won't do to leave her and my godson too much together."

Whilst moving his men, Bellequeue meditated how he could put Jean on some other pursuit. All at once an idea struck him. He jumped up from the table suddenly, and taking his hat, left the little housekeeper in the middle of the game."

"Eh, what, are you going out, sir?" said Rose.

"Yes, I have just recollected a very particular business."

"Why you have not finished the game!"

"We will finish it another time."

So saying, Bellequeue made the best of his way to Mme. Durand's, where he knew Jean was not then to be found.

"My dear gossip, I come to speak to you on business," said Bellequeue, sitting down by the widow. "On most important business, in which you are very particularly interested, inasmuch as it relates to your son."

"To my son!" said Mme. Durand, "speak my dear Bellequeue, has any thing happened to him."

"No, no, make yourself easy; he is just now smoking or playing billiards, or it may be, doing both together. You see there is nothing alarming in it. But, Madame, it is of what is to happen hereafter—of the future fate of Jean, that I wish to speak to you."

"Oh, it is only the future fate of Jean that troubles you! is not he rich? has not he a certain fortune?"

"No doubt, if he does not throw it away right and left: *cafès, traiteurs*, excursions to the country, all these cost money you know."

"My son is at the age to enjoy these things, and why should not he amuse himself?"

"What you say is perfectly correct. I should be the last man in the world to blame him. But my godson's heart is only too good, it makes him too complying. He lends here and there, and is never repaid; when he is in a cafè he pays for those who are out of cash, as his companions generally are."

"That proves his sensibility."

"It proves also that he has no foresight. If he allows himself to be gulled in this way he will be ruined by people who will only laugh at him. Besides, Jean seems getting tired of this idle life. How often does he come yawning to me in a morning, and saying, 'I don't know what the devil to do with myself to-day?'"

"Very true, he certainly yawns very often. Have you invented any game to amuse him, my dear Belleqqueue."

"I have invented nothing; but I have found what Jean wants—and that is a wife."

"How?"

"We must marry him at once."

"Do you really think so?"

"Why not. Jean is full twenty years old, and his height and fine manly appearance make him look twenty-five."

"That's very true."

"Many young people have married much younger than that. I am sure it is exactly the thing—it will steady him. He will no longer run the round of the

cafés. The money which he now lends to any one that asks for it he will keep for his children, and he will not yawn quite so often. For when one has a wife, egad! one has something to think about."

The good mamma reflected for some moments, and then said, "I begin to think that you are right, my dear Bellequeue: what an excellent husband Jean will make!"

"Excellent, I have no doubt."

"But we must look about for an equally good wife."

"I have had an eye to that."

"Indeed!"

"Just now, while playing draughts — with — my — housekeeper, I thought of my dear godson. You know how much I love him: I have long had this idea in my mind. All at once the Chopard family occurred to me, and I said, 'The very people we want; here is a wife for Jean.'"

"How! the Chopard family — give me leave" —

"You know M. Chopard is a retired distiller; you are acquainted with him?"

"Very little: M. Durand did not like him."

"Ah! because Chopard, who is a joker, once said to our poor Durand, 'You are but a *simple* man, and I am all *spirit*.' A mere joke. Chopard is a terrible hand at punning; there is no harm in it; and he is a perfectly honest man, and his wife is a gay, laughing creature."

"She is such a fool!"

"You know that is of no consequence; it is not the wife that Jean is to marry, but the daughter, Mlle. Adelaide Chopard — an only child — a lovely woman—and so well brought up: she made noyeau at eight years old, so must be perfectly competent to manage a family. She will have sixty thousand

francs down, to say nothing of her expectancies. The Chopards have at least ten thousand francs a-year."

"Indeed! are you quite sure?"

"I have known the Chopards a long time; I used to dine there twice a-week before I took my housekeeper. Their daughter is about nineteen, but looks twenty-eight, and so will match very well with Jean."

"And do they think of marrying her?"

"Yes, they have actually refused a rich wine-merchant, because Mlle. Chopard did not like living at Picpus: but I am pretty certain they would not refuse my godson."

"They would be hard to please indeed, if they did: you say the young woman is handsome?"

"Oh, extremely handsome; a well proportioned Grecian face; rather large, perhaps, but as she grows older, her cheeks will fall in; she will make an extremely fine woman."

"We must learn if Jean would like to be married."

"I think he would. If he saw it would give you pleasure, I am sure he would consent."

"My dear Jean! I should be so delighted to see him happy and well married."

"He can't do better than marry Mlle. Chopard, provided all parties approve of it; for the parents of the young lady would no more constrain their daughter, than you would your son."

"They are right; we must find out, then, what the young people think of it."

"Yes, but it is necessary for that purpose that they should see each other. Would you like me to take an invitation from you to the Chopards to dinner?"

"Is not that being a little too quick?"

"When a marriage is in question, the quicker it is set about, the better. Besides, I must feel my way with the Chopards, before I drop a word of our intentions."

"Unknown to the young lady, I beg of you."

"Understood,— I should wish to have begun by taking Jean with me, but there is no getting him to enter into society; whereas he cannot escape if we bring them here."

"Say nothing to him till he has seen the young lady."

"No; for it would be just like him, to go away before the Chopards came. After all, a dinner pledges you to nothing, and if Mlle. Adelaide does not please him, I have half a dozen others to propose."

"Settle every thing as you like, my dear Bellequeue, I leave it all to you."

"Agreed; and I pledge myself that my godson will soon be married."

Bellequeue bade adieu to Madame Durand, well pleased with the success of his project, and returned home, saying to himself, "By marrying Jean to Mlle. Chopard, I shall be pretty sure of getting rid of him in the mornings, and he will not have quite so much time to spend with my little housekeeper."

It is thus, in almost all the actions of our life, our own interests are the first considered.

CHAPTER XII.

Next morning, after finishing his toilette, Bellequeue repaired to the Chopards, who lived in the Rue de Berry. The Chopards were extremely good kind of people. The husband was fond of making puns, and laughed for hours at an old bon-mot which he had already sported a hundred times. His wife's faith was great: she laughed as soon as her husband opened his mouth; and often, after bringing the tears in her eyes, she would ask him what he had said. Mlle. Adelaide was idolized by her parents, who had no other child. Far different from Jean, who would not follow his father's business, the little Chopard had shown a strong taste for distillation. When quite young, she made several essays in brandying cherries and plums, and her astonished parents sent to the Exhibition of Arts and Sciences an apricot preserved by their daughter at the age of seven years. Strange to say, the apricot was not received.

However, Mlle. Adelaide was rather capricious and sulky, somewhat exacting, and always headstrong. In her parents' eyes she was faultless. She

had begun music and drawing, but made little or no progress in either. She had tried astronomy, then history, then botany, then chemistry. In a word, she had a smattering of all, but knew nothing, except a way of making most excellent ratafia. The Chopards thought their daughter all-perfect, and submitted to her judgment in every thing. In this way Mlle. Chopard had grown up to her nineteenth year. She was tall, and tolerably well made. Her person, though, large, was not unpleasing. Her eyebrows were strongly marked, which gave a degree of harshness to her countenance. As she had the name of being an heiress, many young people had already paid their court to her. Adelaide was not easily pleased. She was so accustomed to flattery that the compliments of her suitors had no effect on her. And when her parents said, "Will you marry such a one," she would reply, "Ah no, he made the same speeches as all the rest."

Bellequeue found M. and Mme. Chopard *tête-à-tête*, which was just what he wished. He spoke of the charming Adelaide. Speak to parents of their only child—to an author of his works—to an old soldier of his battles—a coquette of her conquests—or a lover of his mistress, and they will listen to you for ever.

"She is astonishing," said Mme. Chopard. "Our dear Adelaide knows every thing. She argues on all with most extraordinary facility."

"True," said M. Chopard; "whatever the subject, astronomy or music, medicine or liqueurs, she is never at a loss. In the most trifling things, M. Bellequeue, she shows her amazing sagacity. What do you think of her sitting down to vingt-un the other evening, though she had never seen the game before!"

"I could not have believed it," said Bellequeue.

"She enters with so much spirit into every thing," said M. Chopard, "that I sometimes think I am not her father, though every thing I have manufactured has been *spirited* enough. Eh! ha, ha! not bad that."

"Ah, ah, ah, for God's sake, M. Chopard, don't make me laugh so. It is true, our daughter has received a first-rate education; we spared nothing."

"Yes, she has had a dozen masters, and now she is the mistress. Oh, oh, oh! do you take, eh?"

Whilst Mme. Chopard was laughing at this last witticism, Bellequeue got in a word saying, "How comes it so fine a girl remains unmarried?"

"Oh, husbands are not wanting, but the lady is difficult. She is very hard to please. It is natural enough, you will admit, that a young woman, so well informed, would not willingly marry any other than a man of education — that is, a man who can be a companion to her."

"The devil," thought Bellequeue; "if they want a man of learning, I don't think Jean will exactly answer: never mind, we can but try," and tapping M. Chopard on the shoulder, he said, "I think I know some one who would just suit your daughter; not exactly a man of science, but a fellow well able to talk to any woman. What think you of a handsome lad, twenty years of age, and an only son, who will have twelve thousand francs a year?"

"All that sounds very well; and who is the young man?"

"The son of the late M. Durand, herbalist in the Rue St. Paul."

"The son of poor Durand who was so fond of his simples? Ah, I recollect seeing him when quite young."

"But I think I have heard him spoken of as rather a bad character."

"The merest calumny, I assure you, Mme. Cho-

pard. Jean Durand is lively, and perhaps a little giddy. He loves pleasure as most young people do; but he is as open as the day, and as modest as a young woman. Besides, he is my godson; and as I have never lost sight of him, I can answer for him."

"If that's the case, we might——However, Adelaide will see, with half an eye, if he will suit her. Her tact is astonishing."

"What! is she as knowing in men too?"

"She is up to every thing, my dear friend. She is an uncommonly clever girl. I assure you her husband will have very little to teach her."

"Well, to come to the point. I am deputed by Mme. Durand to invite you to take a family dinner with her to-morrow, and to bring the young lady. The young folks are to know nothing about it, and we shall be the better able to judge how they like each other. Mme. Durand would have called herself; but when parents are really desirous of marrying their children, there is no occasion for ceremony. Will you come?"

"Well, we will," said M. Chopard. "We will wait on Mme. Durand. If the young people don't take to each other, why there is only a dinner lost. We will take care it shall not be a lost dinner. Ha, ha, ha! a lost dinner!"

"Capital," said Bellequeue; "but I will go and let Mme. Durand know, that she may prepare for you."

As Bellequeue was bowing himself out, he encountered Mlle. Adelaide, who ran up to her father affectedly, and holding out a little jar, she said, "Papa, papa, look at my plums — an experiment I have tried — without sugar; see, how sound and firm they are — so very green."

"Astonishing!" said Chopard, handing the jar to his wife: "Look, Mme. Chopard."

Madame hung enamoured over the greengages. Bellequeue was called upon for his tribute of admiration.

"And are they really done by you, Mademoiselle?" said he.

Oh! a mere trifle, sir. I can preserve a bunch of grapes quite whole."

"A bunch of grapes?" said Chopard. "Gad! she will finish by brandying every thing."

The father whispered Bellequeue, "I say, a wife who can preserve plums in this way, would take good care of her husband. Preserve, eh!"

"A treasure, indeed; we must try and steal it from you. Adieu! my dear friends, till to-morrow."

Bellequeue smiled graciously at Mlle. Adelaide, and withdrew to report progress to Mme. Durand. When the door was shut, Mlle. Adelaide said, "Is M. Bellequeue come courting?"

"No child, no; not him," said Mme. Chopard; "but, to-morrow, you will see some one."

"Hush, wife; you know we are not to say any thing. Let her see young Durand, without her knowing any thing of our intentions."

"True, M. Chopard. My dear child, we must not tell you any thing. Besides, you will see Mme. Durand's son to-morrow, as we are going to dine with her. We must leave the rest to chance."

"I will bet any thing," said Mlle. Adelaide, smilingly, "that M. Durand wants to marry me."

"Well, now, if that is not odd!" said Mme. Chopard. "We did not give the slightest hint. But there is no help for it; she foretells every thing."

"She takes after me, Mme. Chopard: when I was a child, I foretold everything; and they said I must

deal with Spirits. 'If so,' said I, 'make me a distiller.' Ha, ha, ha! most capital that; I will sport that to-morrow at dinner."

On the other hand, Madame Durand waited impatiently for her son's return, as she wished to know his sentiments on marriage. As soon as he came in she said, "Don't you sometimes wish, Jean, that you were settled?"

"Settled in what?" said Jean, "I know nothing of business."

"You don't understand me: when one speaks of being settled, one means married."

"Ah! married, you mean! Devil take me if I ever thought about it; but I think I should cut a very ridiculous figure as a married man."

"Why, you are considerably upwards of twenty—and then you have such a sensible look."

"I have not much sense to boast of, however."

"Marriage will steady your character: when a man has a wife and children, he has an object—something to make him look forward."

"I should like it well enough, I dare say."

"With what pleasure shall I see you settled in your own house."

"Well, we shall see: do you talk the matter over with my godfather, and provided there is no dancing attendance, and paying compliments, 'gad, I don't care if I do marry."

"That's a good lad! Now, my dear Jean, don't dine out to-morrow: I have a few persons—some friends, to whom I wish to introduce you."

"Ah, if you are to have company, and I must sit bolt upright, and speak when I am spoken to, and all that sort of thing——you know how it bothers me."

"No, no, there will be no ceremony—they are very

pleasant people; you may say just what you please—and your godfather dines with us."

"Well, be it so: but I give you fair notice, that if I find them tiresome, I shall cut my stick very quickly."

The important day arrived. At four o'clock, Bellequeue walked into the room. He was dressed in black, with buckles in his shoes. As soon as Jean saw him, he said, "Why the devil are you dressed in that way, to come and dine with us? Why, you are puffed out and powdered, and are as fine as a new pin."

"One should be always a little particular in one's dress in going into company."

"Do you call this company?"

"What else? Besides, your mother expects all the Chopards."

"Who are they? I never heard of them before."

"Extremely respectable people—rich—retired from business."

"That is not what I mean; what do I care whether they are rich or poor; are they pleasant, merry people?"

"Oh very merry; Chopard is a terrible joker."

"Does he smoke?"

"Why, as to that, you don't suppose a man lives to fifty without smoking? in fact, you will find him a jolly fellow; and his wife laughs almost as much as your cousin Aglaë. As for their daughter——"

"Oh! there is a daughter!"

"A magnificent girl! An astonishingly well-read woman, and so accomplished — she can make every kind of liqueur."

"Some sense in that, by my faith!"

"We shall also have Madame Ledoux," said Mme.

Durand; "she grows old, but she is such a good woman."

"Ah," said Jean, "we shall hear enough of her husbands and children."

"No, she is getting too confused—she is losing her memory; but she is nearly seventy years old."

Before the company arrived, Bellequeue would fain have put Jean's hair in papers; but he would not consent, nor would he even oblige him by putting on another cravat.

The Chopard family were punctual; Mlle. Adelaide was in full dress—notwithstanding her heavy brows and square face, her appearance was rather striking, and she might be called a fine girl. Whilst compliments were exchanging, Mlle. Adelaide, for all her downcast looks, had contrived to steal a look at Jean, who, for his part, remained stuck in a corner of the room, and took no notice of the arrival of the company. His mother was obliged to call him, saying, "Let me introduce you to M. and Madame Chopard."

Jean stepped forward, and nodding his head, said, roughly, "Good morning to you," and then walked off to the window, whistling.

"Is not he a handsome fellow?" whispered Bellequeue.

"Very much so," replied Chopard.

"He seems fond of music," said Madame Chopard.

"Devoted to it," replied Bellequeue; "he whistles equal to a flute."

Mlle. Adelaide said nothing, but stole a glance every now and then to Jean: she was prepared for the compliments, and soft nothings, she had been accustomed to receive from her other admirers. Jean, however, remained whistling at the window, and did not condescend even to look at her, which not a little surprised Mlle. Adelaide.

Madame Durand and Bellequeue did their best to set conversation going. M. Chopard made a few hits; his wife laughed, but the daughter was silent. The arrival of Madame Ledoux caused some little stir: she excused herself for being late, and held open her arms to Jean, saying, "Why, he is grown quite a man! and the image of——you know, neighbour, one of my children, who was a bailiff, I think—or an upholsterer; no, I had one a stationer: 'pon my word, I quite forget; never mind—your son is his very image."

At length Catherine announced dinner, to their great relief, for Bellequeue could scarcely keep up the ball, and M. Chopard was scratching his head for a new pun.

"Take care of the ladies," said Bellequeue, rising, and taking Madame Chopard's hand, while M. Chopard led out Madame Durand and Madame Ledoux. Mlle. Adelaide remained in the room with Jean, naturally supposing that he would offer his hand to lead her out; but Jean, turning from the window and seeing no one else remaining, contented himself with saying, "Well, don't you go to dinner?—for my part I am as hungry as a wolf,"—and very coolly walked out of the room.

Mlle. Chopard did not know what to think of Jean's want of politeness. Bellequeue seeing his godson enter the dining-room alone, hurried out to Mlle. Adelaide, to whom he said, "M. Durand is so very bashful; I engage he did not dare offer you his hand."

"Ah, he is bashful, is he? I should not have thought it."

"He is a singular young man—a very odd character; you see he does nothing like other people."

Mlle. Adelaide was seated next to Jean, who spoke

very little to her: he took care, however, that she should want for nothing. From time to time, he said, "Is not that good?—do you like that?—Why don't you drink, then?—you are drinking nothing." To these laconic phrases, Mlle. Adelaide replied in monosyllables. She expected every moment some little well-turned compliment from her neighbour; but her neighbour looked as if he never even dreamt of such a thing; and Mlle. Adelaide began to think that Bellequeue was right, and that Jean really never did anything like any other person.

M. Chopard warmed with his dinner: he had already made two good hits on the cucumbers, and found the bread exceeding good, liking everything, as he said, *well-bred.* Mme. Chopard was ready to burst with laughter; Mme. Durand tried to get up a smile; Bellequeue ate and drank like a man, who had no fear of marriage before his eyes, and Mme. Ledoux was every moment asking her neighbour what was said. Jean, sang as he eat, and Mme. Chopard said, "How very gay that young man is; he is all life and spirits."

As Jean liked his glass, he took care to fill M. Chopard's, who whispered Mme. Durand, "Your son has been extremely well brought up."

At the second course, Jean remembered what Bellequeue had mentioned of Mlle. Chopard, and turning suddenly round to her, he said, "I am told, you can make liqueurs."

Mlle. Adelaide bit her lips, and replied, poutingly, "I can make something more than that, sir."

"Ah, I dare say; a woman must have something to employ her. They can't do as we do, run from cafès to billiards."

"Oh I can play at billiards."

"Indeed!"

"Oh, yes, we have a billiard-table at my father's country-house, where I often play. I also play on the piano-forte."

"They wanted to stick me down to the fiddle—"

"But music was too much for my nerves—"

"It gave me a pain in my ears—"

"I also learned to draw, and studied the antique models: I drew a Cupid, which was not thought bad."

"I once drew Punch, after a model, too."

"I have a taste for botany; I like going out in the fields."

"Ah, good God! don't talk about it; I remember that my father flogged me, because I would not learn the names in Latin. I have forgotten all but the rue."

"But I dropped that for astronomy. Ah! what a delightful study! to learn the names of the planets; to know when Venus rises, when Saturn sets—"

"He sets down when he is tired, I suppose."

"The polar star; the milky way—"

"Try some of that cream, I'll engage it beats all your milky way."

"But history is better than all. Oh, history is so interesting, so amusing—"

"Yes, my nurse used to put me asleep with that."

"Those Greeks and Romans; the fathers killing their sons—the sons killing their mothers—the brothers killing each other."

"What a devil of a set of fellows!"

"Iphigenia, who loved so well—Hector—and that Tarquin, who ran away with Helen—nothing can be more interesting than the siege of Troy."

"My daughter is letting herself out," said Mme. Chopard to Bellequeue; "she will not stop now."

Jean stared at Mlle. Adelaide, and began whistling

between his teeth. M. Chopard filled Mme. Ledoux's glass, who had nearly drank enough. Mme. Chopard was sufficiently employed in laughing at her husband's jokes, and in admiring her daughter's speeches. Mme. Durand was delighted with her son's behaviour, who was, however, leaning with both his elbows on the table : but as the dessert had arrived, it passed off as a happy carelessness. Mlle. Adelaide began to take to Jean ; for women have always a secret penchant for men who are not like the rest of the world.

They stayed a long time at table. M. Chopard and Jean drank and hobnobbed together, and Bellequeue saw with pleasure that the thing worked well. The ladies talked all at once, and after coffee, Mme. Ledoux assured them, she had had fourteen husbands, and three children by each.

Mme. Chopard, who was proud of her daughter's voice, turned the conversation on singing. M. Chopard said, "He liked it of all things at the dessert, as it kept the company longer together." Bellequeue agreed with them, and led the way by singing, "*Femmes, voulez vous éprouver*," in a languishing tone, smiling tenderly at the same time on the women. After the second couplet, Jean cried, "Why, godfather, you sing that as if you had been living on honey for the last fortnight." "It is certainly very tender," said M. Chopard ; "but I like something very lively, such as, '*Rendez moi mon écuelle de bois*," or, '*Dans un verger Colinette ;*' one is never tired of those."

M. Chopard sang several couplets, which Jean accompanied by whistling and beating time on the table. Mlle. Adelaide was then begged to favour the company. After a great deal of pressing, she commenced an air ; then another, because she could not recollect the words : after beginning four songs without finishing one, she declared she would learn one on purpose the

next time; and Mme. Chopard cried, "This comes of knowing too much; it only puzzles. My daughter has learnt at least three hundred songs, and can never recollect the whole of one; she really knows too much."

It was now Jean's turn. He thundered out a drinking song. "That's very good in its way," said Bellequeue, "but I dare say these ladies would prefer some other song." Upon which Jean struck up "*La Béquille du Père Barnaba*," but Mme. Chopard soon stopt him, saying, "I have heard that before; my husband used to sing it formerly," and she whispered Mme. Durand, "Adelaide would be shocked."

Jean then began, "*Rien Père Cyprien*," but Mme. Chopard once more interfered, saying, "We know that also."

"*Sacre bleu!*" said Jean, "if you won't let me finish anything, why the devil did you ask me to sing?"

"Very true," said Adelaide, "let Monsieur finish his song?"

To prevent anything unpleasant, Bellequeue begged Jean to sing one of Bérenger's songs. A song was sung, they joined chorus, hobnobbed together, and all was peace and harmony again. Bellequeue fearing Jean might be again asked, and having no faith in his choice of songs, was the first to observe that it was getting late, and the Chopards arose and took their leave of Mme. Durand, making her promise that herself and Jean would speedily return their visit.

CHAPTER XIV.

On their return home, the anxious parents did not fail to ask their daughter what she thought of Jean. They were seldom in the habit of making up their own minds, till they had heard her opinion. Mlle. Chopard pronounced Jean to be a man very different to the general run. She admitted that he was somewhat odd in his manners; but she had sounded him, and found he could talk extremely well, and was never at a loss on any subject.

"He is a man of science," said Madame Chopard, "I guessed as much, the first time I saw him. He must have found his match in you, my child."

"Why, yes, we discussed several subjects most fully."

"For my part," said M. Chopard, "I like his frank open-hearted manner. He is not one of those who think only of themselves. He is a fine tall fellow too, and all young ladies are partial to high men.—Ah! that's capital, is not it?—*Hymen!* Ha! ha! ha!"

The fact was, Mademoiselle Adelaide was not displeased with Jean's appearance, and piqued at his

not paying those compliments she had been so much in the habit of receiving, she felt, in spite of herself, a certain interest in him; which, with the woman, is often the commencement of a more tender sentiment.

On her side, Madame Durand tried to find out what her son thought of Mlle. Chopard. Jean seemed in a very happy state of indifference. He did not think much about Mademoiselle Adelaide, either one way or the other, but on the whole rather admired her; which was a point gained, and Bellequeue who well knew his godson's taste, did not fail to say, "With such a wife as that, my friend, a husband would have nothing to do from morning to night; she would be so capable of managing, and would make plenty of brandy fruits and every sort of liqueur."

"Nothing to do"——it was attacking Jean on his weak side.

He smiled at his godfather, and said, "Well, if you are as much interested as my mother in this business—with all my heart, Mademoiselle Chopard will do as well as any other."

Madame Durand caught her son in her arms, and Bellequeue went to the Chopards to hear their report of his godson. His mind rather misgave him, as he feared Jean's very ungallant conduct could not have been very pleasing to Mademoiselle Adelaide: he was not quite at his ease when he arrived at the old distiller's, whom he found alone, and whom he asked at once what he thought of Jean.

"Think of him," cried M. Chopard, "why, he is a delightful fellow; an original, but a really clever man."

"How!" said Bellequeue, who fancied he did not hear rightly.

"Ah, you pretend not to understand; but my

daughter soon found him out: I tell you he is a man of science; my daughter says so, and there is no deceiving her."

"Oh, I don't by any means say to the contrary; but you see he sinks all this before us."

"Very likely; but he could not hide it from my daughter; and, when she has said a thing"——

"I understand, then, she does not dislike him."

"Very much the contrary; but the young man must come and see us; he must chat and talk with Adelaide."

"Of course! of course! I'll bring him here to-morrow evening."

"Do so, and let them amuse themselves. We must pretend to know nothing of what is going on. After all, marriage is but a lottery. I hope theirs will not prove a *lot-awry*: Ha, ha, ha!"

"Very good that, very good, excellent! Good morning, my dear Chopard; I think every thing is in a fair way."

"I think so, too: if my daughter does not draw a prize, I shall look *blank* enough: Ha, ha, ha!"

Bellequeue went away delighted. He returned home, his eyes sparkling, and Rose perceived that something had happened. Young girls are, in general, curious, and the little housekeeper exercised some authority over her master: she insisted on knowing every thing he did; and immediately asked him, what made him look so pleased.

"Oh, nothing," replied Bellequeue, with a knowing look.

"That's a fib," said Rose, "but you won't put me off in that way; I insist on knowing what you have been about; if you don't I'll pull your hair out."

This threat made Bellequeue smile, and he mut-

tered to himself, "How jealous she is — she is worse than a Turk; if she met me with a female, I don't know what would be the consequence."

"Well, sir," said Rose, "have you made up your mind whether to tell me or not?"

"My dear friend, I was going to tell you every thing; but you are such a petulant little animal."

"No matter what I am. Let us hear."

"Well then, I have just been settling a little business, which gives me great pleasure."

"Well; what is this little business?"

"Why—the marriage of my godson."

"The marriage of Mr. Jean!—you are going to marry him?"

"Don't you hear."

"A young man not twenty!"

"Twenty and a half, nearly."

"No matter. 'Tis not common sense: you must have lost your head to think of marrying a young man who dreams of nothing but amusing himself."

Mademoiselle Rose bit her lips, and seemed in a very bad temper.

For his part Bellequeue replied in a severe tone of voice, "Mademoiselle, mind your own business—and do not give your tongue quite so much liberty, I beg of you."

Rose tossed her head, and returned to her kitchen.

She said nothing more all the morning; — but this day the fowl was burnt, the cutlets done to a cinder, and the soup spoiled. Bellequeue made a very bad dinner. "Poor Rose," thought he, "I said too much to her. She must have felt it, or she would not have neglected the dinner in this way."

Leaving to a more fit opportunity the making peace with Rose, and quite occupied with the affair, the termination of which he had so much at heart, Belle-

queue took his hat after dinner, and instead of sitting down to draughts with his housekeeper, he repaired to Madame Durand to recount to her the favourable dispositions of the Chopard family.

Madame Durand was not in the least surprised at the success of her son. "I knew," said she, "that Jean would turn their heads the instant they saw him. Mademoiselle Chopard ought to be very much flattered at being his choice."

"Certainly," said Bellequeue, "my godson is a very handsome man: but you must admit that——as to the sciences — I can't conceive what could have made them take him for a learned man."

"Why," said Madame Durand, "do you think my son for a fool?"

"No, my dear gossip, by no means; but"—

"You are just like his father, who always said he knew nothing. For my part, I always said he knew every thing. Do you think a clever lad like him requires to have every thing beat into him. Where would be the use of talent, if one required to study, like all the rest of the world?"

"You are quite right in what you say; but"—

"But, my dear Bellequeue, I tell you my son would coax the heart of a princess, if he chose."

"I don't in the least doubt it, my dear gossip; but we are forgetting Mademoiselle Adelaide Chopard, who is not a princess, to be sure, but who I am certain will make my godson a very happy man."

"I don't doubt it, and I like the idea of this marriage excessively."

"Well, then, make Jean come with us to-morrow evening to the Chopards."

"Depend upon it, he shall come."

Bellequeue left Madame Durand, saying to himself, "If they insist on my godson's being a man of science

let him be so, with all my heart. The great thing is to marry him. I shall then be more quiet, and not be running about all day on other people's business. I could sit down at my ease with Rose to a game of draughts; she would then have no longer any cause for jealousy, and it is to be hoped, would not spoil my dinner."

Madame Durand told her son of the intended visit to the Chopards, and that he had made a conquest of Mademoiselle Adelaide, who was quite pleased at finding him so well informed.

"You might easily persuade her, then, that a crow was an eagle; and I begin to think that this young lady, who is so knowing in preserves, is no great conjuror after all. You know very well, mother, that I can do nothing but drink, smoke, swear, and play at billiards."

"You don't know your own talents, son."

"You may say that; I did not know that I had even one."

"Well, but you will come with me to the Chopards, won't you?"

Jean always took fright at the very word visit. Ignorant of all the manners and customs of polite life, he found himself very ill at ease in the drawing-room: he could not resist, however, the importunities of his mother; besides, he found that no great ceremony was requisite with the Chopards.

The Chopards were prepared for Madame Durand and her son. They had invited a few friends to make up a party at vingt-un. Wax replaced the ordinary tallow candles; the chairs and sofas were uncovered, and the eyes were dazzled with a brilliant display of old blue embroidered satin, which had only seen the daylight six times in upwards of fifteen years. The toilette was not forgotten. Mademoiselle Adelaide had bestowed no little pains on her head-dress; feel-

ing, for the first time, an anxious desire to please, and, for the first time also, doubting her success. M. Chopard had not forgotten to arrange on a *console* about a dozen little jars, containing the boasted productions of Mademoiselle, his daughter; and which he never failed to produce in evidence whenever a matrimonial candidate presented himself.

Three neighbours had already arrived, and Mlle. Adelaide was beginning to pout, as no M. Jean had yet appeared, although it was seven o'clock. Presently, a bell rang, and the voice of Bellequeue was heard, who was escorting Mme. Durand. The parlour door opened, and the cook-maid ran before, in order to announce them; but Jean pulled her back by her apron, saying, "We can speak for ourselves; besides, don't you think they will know us again?" Twisting the girl around, he walked into the room, his hat still on his head, and going up to M. Chopard, and slapping him on the shoulder, said, "How goes it, my old buck?"

M. Chopard turned round, and perceived Jean in a great coat, dirty boots, coloured cravat, and no gloves. His mother and Bellequeue had, in vain, tried to make him dress himself. But as Mlle. Adelaide had pronounced Jean to be a man of science, and a character, the old gentleman thought all was right, and squeezing his hand cordially, said, "Good evening, Professor;" then turning to his friends, he whispered, "Observe the negligent dress of this young man; he is very eccentric. Young men of science never trouble themselves about dress; they are above all that."

"In that case," said one of the neighbours, "he must be an extremely deep read man indeed."

Mlle. Adelaide was not altogether so well pleased with Jean's deshabille; however, she stood up to

receive him, but he seemed never to have thought about her. He got sight of the jars, and turning to Chopard, said, "What, are we to swallow all these? Good cheer with a vengeance."

"Why, yes; marriage bells have a cheerful sound; but egad, my lad, I don't think you would fancy a *belle* without a prospect of good cheer. Ha, ha, ha!"

Bellequeue, who saw that Mlle. Adelaide was biting her lips, not a little annoyed at Jean's want of gallantry, whispered him, "Why don't you wish Mlle. Chopard good evening?"

"True," said Jean, aloud; "Devil take me if I had not quite forgotten her."

Jean walked over to the sofa, on which Mlle. Adelaide was reclining, and throwing himself lazily down by her side, said, "Well, my princess, what have you got to say for yourself this evening?"

Mlle. Adelaide, quite astonished to find herself so familiarly addressed by a man whom she had seen only once before, knew not what to say.

M. Chopard, who had overheard Jean, whispered his wife, "Did you hear him call her princess? That is quite in a courtier's style. Don't let us seem to take any notice, but come away from the sofa, and leave them to themselves."

"Yes," said Bellequeue, "I rather think, the less we hear of what they say the better."

They busied themselves in getting up a game at vingt-un; and the sofa being at the other end of the room, the young people were left *tête-à-tête*, and could talk away as they pleased.

Mlle. Adelaide did not know what to make of Jean. Her habitual confidence forsook her, and being at a loss what to say, she dropped her eyes, and heaved a gentle sigh.

"Does your dinner disagree with you?" said Jean.

"By no means," said Mlle. Chopard, quickly. "A person may sigh without having over-eaten themselves, I suppose."

"Oh yes, to be sure. I heave a long breath myself sometimes; particularly when I feel weary."

"But I beg, sir, that you would not think I feel any ennui just now."

"And if you did feel tired," said Jean, "there would be nothing astonishing in it, sitting near a man you know so little."

"A well educated person, sir, never feels tired in company."

"Ah, that's the reason, I suppose, that I often feel so very much tired."

"You are only joking."

"No; may I be struck with lightning if it's not true!"

"All's well," said M. Chopard to Bellequeue, stealing a look at the sofa. "How interested they appear. I engage they are deep in some subject."

"They certainly seem very animated," said Bellequeue, who was so overjoyed, that he asked for more cards, although he was twenty-four and did not see that he was burst.

After a moment's silence, Jean, who generally went to the point, said, "By the bye, I think they wish to marry us."

Mlle. Adelaide turned as rosy as a milk-maid, and stammered "Really — sir — I don't know."

"Ah, you don't know. I thought they might have spoken to you as they have to me. But no matter, you know it now, and we can talk about it; for if we are really to be married, we had better get a little acquainted with each other. How do you like the idea?"

"Why, sir —— I think —— that is, I don't think —— really —— you take one so unawares."

"Where the devil is the necessity of wasting three hours about an affair of this kind? You like or you don't like — that is all."

"But one can't say so all at once."

"Why not? for my part, I should like to know what I have to expect. To tell you the truth, I never thought about marrying at all: but my mother and godfather are for ever dinning in my ears, that it will be the best thing for me — that it will make me wiser and steadier. I think I am steady enough already: but, however, as they wish it, I am quite content to marry."

Such a declaration as this completely upset all Mlle. Adelaide's preconceived ideas: accustomed to be told "I adore you — I never can be happy without you," by all those who had previously aspired to her hand, she thought that to this, Jean would come first or last; and was, therefore, quite unprepared, and had no answer ready for this abrupt address.

Tired of Mlle. Chopard's silence, who sat, not knowing what to say or how to look, Jean squeezed her knee familiarly, and said, "Have I been talking Chinese to you?"

Mlle. Adelaide drew back quickly, saying, "Who do you think you are speaking to, sir? upon my word, I have never been accustomed to such liberties! No one ever addressed me in such a style as this before."

Jean looked the young lady full in the face and burst into a fit of laughter, which only augmented her confusion.

The old gentleman, whilst playing, said to Mme. Durand, "Your son burns up like phosphorus. See how he makes up to my daughter — *vingt-un* on

both, you pay me double, two farthings on each; that's a capital *coup*."

When Jean could stop laughing, he approached Mlle. Adelaide, and said, "Did you really think I came here courting?"

"By no means."

"I am ready to marry you, if you like; if not, there is no harm done: our parents wish it, but we will do nothing but what we like ourselves."

"But, sir, should not there be some little love before marriage?"

"I don't see the use of it; for my part, I should lie most confoundedly if I told you I was in love with you."

"How extremely gallant!"

"Perhaps you would rather I said what I did not think, and told you I was?"

"I should certainly wish that you might become so; it does not seem that there would be any great difficulty in it."

"Too much difficulty for me; and as to being gallant, and dancing attendance, I pretend to nothing of the kind. I go at once to the point, and abominate all affectation and prudery: you see me just as I am.—Well! you can think of what our friends wish; there is no hurry, take your own time.—Meanwhile I'll taste some of those bottles; I shan't be sorry to see some of your skill in distillation."

So saying, Jean rose, and walking over to the *console*, took a bottle of preserved cherries. "I say, daddy Chopard, can't we manage to come at these? it was not only to gratify our eyesight, that you stuck all these in a row."

"Certainly not," said M. Chopard, rising from the *vingt-un* table, after whispering his neighbours,—

"more of the young man's odd ways you see;" and desiring a servant to bring glasses, he opened a bottle, saying, "I know very well what you will say — there never were such brandied fruits as these; though a man had taken an oath against preserves, I am sure he would not be able to *preserve* his oath. Eh! eh! eh! famous! Mme. Chopard, try to remember that!"

Mme. Chopard laughed till the tears came in her eyes, and all the players quitted the table, for they thought the cherries well worth the game at *gingt-un*, particularly when played for farthings.

After the cherries, Jean proposed trying another bottle, and then a third; and as each was found to be superior to the preceding, and drew fresh compliments to Mlle. Adelaide, the Chopards were delighted, and would have willingly opened every bottle in the house. Mme. Durand, however, mistrusted her son, and begged they might resume their game.

They re-seated themselves at the table. Jean walked up and down the room, looking at the players or singing and whistling between his teeth. Mlle. Adelaide, still seated on the sofa, looked at him from time to time.

"Dear me, what a very singular young man! who would believe now, that he was in love and wish to marry me? I am sure he is in love with me, though he won't admit it. Besides, M. Bellequeue told papa so."

Seeing that she might sit forever if she waited for Jean, she determined to go to him. She arose with a lively air, laughed loud at every word he said, and at length permitted him to squeeze her knees as he pleased; feeling it necessary to concede something to so very great an original.

The hour of parting arrived, and the heads of the families separated, well pleased with each other.

On their way Mme. Durand again asked her son how he liked Mlle. Adelaide; and Jean, who had been very well pleased with the little liberties that the lady allowed him, replied, "That he thought her a fine bouncing girl."

The Chopards did not fail to interrogate their daughter in a similar manner; and, although Jean had not been very gallant to Mlle. Adelaide — although he had not only spoken to her, but treated her very cavalierly, she replied, "I certainly like him sufficiently well to marry him."

When alone in her room, she said, "He has not paid me a single compliment, it is true, but I like him. Besides, I am convinced he loves me, though there is no getting him to say so."

Bellequeue, who was always afraid of Jean's changing his mind, tried to make him commit himself, so that he could not recede with honour. He ran backwards and forwards between the Chopards and Mme. Durand, and every time he saw Mlle. Adelaide he said, "My godson, thinks of no one but you"—and to Jean —"you have played the very devil with that poor girl! she is forever dreaming of you: last night she thought you were changed into a turtle dove."

Jean laughed: Mlle. Adelaide smiled; and the Chopards said to Bellequeue, "If the young man is so very much in love, why does he not come and see us?"

"Singularity of character," said Bellequeue, "he can't bring himself to make love like the rest of the world."

At length, by dint of running backwards and forwards, Bellequeue brought them once more together. The lady blushed, and Bellequeue pushing his godson,

who remained stuck in the middle of the room, said "take the lady's hand—it is the custom when one has serious intentions."

"With all my heart," said Jean, "if it is the custom;" and stepping up to Mlle. Adelaide, he took her hand and squeezed it as if they were old friends.

Bellequeue, slapping M. Chopard on the back, said, "It is settled, they are affianced!"

"Our dear children are affianced," said Mme. Durand, embracing Mme. Chopard: and M. Chopard cried, "Here is a true love knot; it's tight enough now."

Jean still held Mlle. Adelaide's hand, who felt no wish to withdraw it.

M. Chopard went for a bottle of apricots to celebrate the contract.

Jean dropped Mlle. Adelaide's hand for the apricots. They dranked, hob-nobbed, danced and sung. The evening passed off gaily. They embraced at parting, and all the way home Bellequeue kept saying to Jean, "You are now affianced, there is no retracting; you may now look on Mlle. Chopard as your wife."

"Be it so," said Jean, "but devil take me if I ever intended to affiance myself by merely shaking hands with a girl."

The thought of his contract, however, did not interfere with his sleep. As to Bellequeue, he returned home in raptures; and, whilst putting on his dressing-gown, he said, "It is all settled, they cannot retract: they are affianced."

"Who?" said Mlle. Rose.

"Why my godson, Jean Durand, and Mlle. Adelaide Chopard."

"A pretty marriage, indeed!" said Rose, taking her candle.

"Rose, a game of draughts—only one game," cried Bellequeue to his little housekeeper; but she would not hear, and shutting the door of her room, muttered, "Play by yourself, if you like it."

CHAPTER XV.

JEAN had been eight days contracted to Mlle. Chopard. They had settled that the marriage should take place in six weeks time, as Mlle. Adelaide (certain of Jean as a husband) was not sorry to have an opportunity of seeing more of him, for she still flattered herself she could render him gallant and submissive to her desires.

Jean had not taken the trouble to learn when the marriage was to take place, so little did he care whether it was early or late. He went to the Chopards because he found himself as much at home and at ease as in his own house, but he behaved himself towards Mlle. Adelaide as to any other person. Nothing as yet gave promise of his becoming more attached or attentive. On the other hand, the lady felt her liking for young Durand to increase every day; and the more she lamented in secret his not evincing his love, the more she felt she loved him.

The Chopards gave themselves little trouble on the subject, persuaded that their daughter need only be seen to be admired. They imputed all his oddities

to the singularity of his character; and every time he came to visit them, they did not fail to parade the bottles, and to enlarge on the talents of their daughter. Jean had no objection to this, and Mme. Chopard whispered her daughter, "Your intended eats the brandied fruits with the greatest pleasure. This young man loves you most sincerely, my dear child."

Mlle. Adelaide sighed; her mind misgave her that Jean did not love her half so well as he loved the brandied peaches.

Jean was on his return one evening from the Chopards; it was not more than ten, but the streets of the Marais were already empty. On turning into the Rue des Trois Pavillons, he heard the voices of women crying "thieves!" and, at the same moment, a man ran by, holding a shawl in his hand. Jean collared him, and, taking away the shawl, was dragging him along, when the robber said, "Have mercy on me, I am lost."

Jean thought the voice was not unknown to him: involuntarily he loosed his hold on the robber, who immediately took to flight, and Jean ran towards the two ladies who had called out "help!"

These ladies, who were elegantly dressed, and of a genteel appearance, were leaning against the wall, scarce able to support themselves; and seeing Jean coming towards them, they screamed with fear, thinking it was one of the robbers, who had returned to his prey.

Jean re-assured the ladies, and, presenting the shawl, said, "Is this all the rascal took from you? *Sacre bleu!* I am sorry I let him escape. But his voice—it struck me—he was off before I knew what I was doing."

The ladies were profuse of their thanks. The

shawl was a handsome cachemire, and well worth the acknowledgments they made.

"He took my reticule also," said one of the ladies; "but that is a trifling loss. There was nothing in it but a little money, a handkerchief, and a souvenir —the only thing I regret, indeed."

Jean was for running after the robber to get back the recticule, but the ladies would not hear of it. They begged him to have the goodness to escort them to the nearest coach-stand.

Jean offered his arm to the ladies, who accepted it; and on their way told him how the circumstance had occured. They had just left a house in the Rue des Trois Pavillons, and would not take a servant, thinking two women ran no risk, at ten o'clock at night, in a quarter which was far from being a desert. They had intended taking the first coach they could find, but had scarcely gone twenty yards, when a man approached, and snatching the reticule and shawl, ran away with them.

The two ladies, whom Jean was escorting, spoke, first one and then the other, and sometimes both together, as often happens when people are agitated by any unexpected event. One of these ladies might be about forty; the other appeared very young. Both overpowered Jean with thanks, and then began to accuse each other.

"It is your fault, my dear, that this has happened to us."

"Rather yours, my dear friend; I wanted to go three-quarters of an hour ago."

"What could we do? we come so seldom to the Marais to see poor Mme. de St. Luce, and then we should have broken up her game at Boston."

"But she wanted to send for a hackney-coach, and you would not hear of it."

"Her servant is so old, and almost as lame as her mistress; I could not think of letting her."

"Well, we have got off very well."

"Yes, thanks to this gentleman: how frightened I was."

"And I, too; but I screamed out lustily."

"The loss of a shawl was no great harm, but I feared the wretch would have returned and killed us."

"Ah, sir, perhaps we owe our very lives to you."

To all this Jean replied, "*Parbleu!* what I have done is very natural — I am only sorry the rascal made off with your bag — I can assure you he had no idea of returning: on the contrary, when I caught hold of him he was running as hard as he could, and I'll engage he is far enough off by this time."

They now reached a coach-stand. Jean put the ladies in one, and offered to accompany them home if they had still any fear. They thanked him politely, assuring him again how much they felt indebted to him. To get rid of all this, Jean hastily bid them good night and walked away from the carriage, which then drove off.

Jean, who, when escorting the ladies, had turned his back on home, now retraced his steps, fully occupied with the adventure. But it was not of the ladies he thought. The robber's voice still rang in his ears, and called to mind that of one of his old school-fellows.

"Could it really have been Démar?" said Jean, walking quickly down the street in which he had encountered him. "Démar a robber! the trick he played when I quitted him too plainly showed his bent that way. Unfortunate wretch! he has probably made Gervais as bad as himself. Where should I have been now had I not left them as I did—and

all was to have been in common between us. But what folly to take oaths at fifteen years of age! perhaps it would be better never to make any."

Whilst giving way to these thoughts, Jean found himself at the very spot where he had encountered the robber. Something sparkled on the ground: he stooped and picked up a pretty little silk reticule with steel clasps and chain.

"I'll engage," said Jean, "this is the very bag the lady lost. How did we manage not to see it? Confound them, they talked so much, and so overpowered me with their thanks — we should have been better employed in searching about. Never mind, if there is an address inside, these ladies will lose nothing."

Jean opened the reticule, and found within, a purse containing twenty-five francs, a handkerchief, and a pretty souvenir.

"It's the very bag stolen from one of these ladies," said Jean, putting it in his pocket; "but whether from the old or young one I don't recollect; they spoke so often together. I think, however, it was the young one, for she owns the shawl, and no doubt the rascal who attacked them, took both together."

When Jean got home it was more than eleven o'clock: as Mme. Durand had retired for the night, Jean went at once to his own room, and drawing the bag from his pocket he once more took out the souvenir, which he could now examine at his ease.

The souvenir was covered with blue morocco, the four corners inlaid with steel, and it had a plate inscribed simply with the word 'Souvenir.'

"Very pretty," said Jean; "exactly the kind of catch-penny for a fine lady; and it struck me that these ladies were of what they call high fashion. Mlle. Chopard must not flatter herself with having such knick knacks as these. What is the use of all

this? That a man should have a pocket-book is all very well; but a woman — surely she has no occasion for taking notes like a newspaper reporter. But come, let us see if there is anything of consequence in the souvenir; I must look through it to try and find her name and address, as there is nothing of the kind outside. Let us run through the fine lady's memorandums. She little thought they would ever be disclosed to a stranger, I imagine."

Jean seated himself near a lamp on the table, and lighting a cigar, he opened the souvenir, and began reading as follows:

'Mme. Derville expects me at breakfast next week. I have promised to go, as this is the tenth time she has invited me; there is no putting her down; I must go in order to be done with it. I do not like Mme. Derville, she is vain and deceitful; she has a caustic wit, which spares no one. But in the world, if one only saw those whom one loved—'

"What fools these people of the world are," said Jean, "always doing what they don't like, because it is the custom. How I despise them! Why breakfast with Mme. Derville if she did not like it: but who knows, perhaps she called her her dearest friend. Let us see.

'Thursday a ball at Madame de Brémont's — must not forget to order a trimming *en roses panachées*, Clotilda's was so handsome.—Madame Julian's head was extremely well dressed. I must order such another *toque ponceau*.— My bracelets must be new set; I see crosses are worn now.—My comb is quite out of fashion.'

"Ah, my God! here is a chapter on *colifichets*. It is frightful to think of a lady's toilette. It struck me she was a bit of a ettiquette; they are all so—But, Mlle. Chopard, if you bother me with your jewels,

crosses, and combs, I shall beg you to go and set about your ratafia. If these tablets are all about dress, I shall soon have enough of it. I'll see, however ——"

'What a very interesting little child: his name is Adolphus; he is only six years old, his mother is a widow, and has been ill these three months. Poor people! Fauxbourg St. Martin, No. 238. I will call there to-morrow.'

"Come, not bad for a coquette; she has a good heart at all events: I like her a little better."

'Madame de Brémont's ball was delightful: I stood up every dance: Monsieur Valcourt asked me rather too often; it makes one talked about: I begin to think he is in love with me—my dress was very much admired — I have also promised to give a ball to oblige the little St. Amands; the poor little girls! how fond they are of dancing: I shall invite their cousins, the Dormeuils and the St. Leons: as for men, we shall have plenty of them — I will have no écarté, so that the dancing shall not be interfered with.'

"Ah! she always says 'I will,' and never speaks of her husband; has not she one? but that's no proof—ah! here is a different hand; verses I think; a song perhaps—

'How look on thee, sweet Caroline,
And yet resist love's soft infection;
Such grace and beauty you combine,
Each heart to you must yield subjection.
Since power supreme like this you hold,
And sprightly wit and sense unite,
'Tis cruel thus to be so cold
To those, who live but in thy sight.'

"Very fine, upon my word! it is a downright declaration: I shall never be able to come up to any

thing like this — what a pity! I am sure my bride, that is to be, would bottle herself in brandy if 'twould make me do as much—there is something written underneath, but it is almost rubbed out.—'*To Mme. Dorville, by her most sincere adorer.*'

"Madame Dorville—no doubt, that is the name of the owner of the souvenir;—Caroline Dorville,—that is it; now, to find her address. This does not say as much, but as they call her Madame, I suppose she is married—and she receives these verses and declarations. I am not very jealous of Mlle. Adelaide—but when she becomes my wife, I shall not let every coxcomb address her in this manner."

Jean puffed out a mouthful of smoke, and recommenced reading.——'How delighted those poor people were to see me. I have restored to hope, perhaps to life, that poor creature—a mother, dying, broken-hearted at five-and-twenty years of age! Her son danced for joy, whilst the mother kissed my hand, and embracing her child, desired him to kneel and bless me—and a few louis sufficed to change this scene of misery. But I will do something more for her; I'll get work, or a situation, for this poor young woman. When I reflect how many poor people there are similarly situated, I blush to think of the money I have wasted in trifles. I am ready to burn this beautiful trimming, which has cost me three times as much as what I gave these unfortunate people.'

"Come, that is very good; we must not talk of her taste for dress after that. If she has faults, she has some good qualities to balance them—and there is many a one of whom we could not say so much.

'Sunday I dine at Madame St. Leon's.—A tea-party on Monday at Madame Dorfeuil's.—Bespeak a box at the opera on Wednesday.—To send my dressing-case to Monbro.—Three new romances, by Pan-

seron at Frère's, Passage des Panoramas: I heard them sung at Madame de la Roche's, they are charming —a new air, with variations for the piano, by Hérold, a little difficult—but now-a-days every thing easy is played only by learners.—Madame de Rémond has just had her portrait taken; I never saw a better likeness. The painter's address, M. Maricot, Rue Meslée, No. 28.—To ask Constance, the direction of her dress-maker.—Light blue silks much worn.'

"Ah, this is all stuff again. A little while ago she made very sensible reflections, and now she is thinking again of nothing but pleasure, and dress! Ah, that is the way with them all — but all this does not tell me her address.

'Not to forget a piano for my country house, and to send word to my gardener to fill all my *jardinières* with fresh flowers.'

"Ah! a country house, is there? 'Gad every thing is in first-rate style."

'What odd beings these men are! they all say I shall not remain a widow another year. Why not? I have no idea of marrying again: I am free and happy. Had I a child I should not have a wish ungratified.'

"We are a widow, are we? I might have guessed that; but she does not seem to regret the dear departed much:— but come, here is more of it.

'They all pay their court to me — even those who are bound by the most sacred engagements. The first only make me laugh; but I cannot restrain my indignation at the others. They say that woman is weak, but sure I am, I could never be brought to form a guilty connection of that kind. But their self love is so great: they think there is no resisting their wit, talents, and importunities — and unfortunately they succeed but too often. I will see Mme. de P. no more: she is a charming woman, but there is no

bearing her husband. I tremble every moment lest he should betray his absurd passion to his wife.'

"There is some good feeling here," said Jean; "every one, it seems, makes love to the beautiful Caroline. There may be some little mistake in this. Some women fancy a man caught if he merely hand them a chair. *Sacre dieu!* If all men were like me!"

'Hortense and her husband are coming to live in Paris: she has desired me to take a lodging for her. I am told there is a very good one in the Rue Sentier, and another in the Rue Richer, near the Fauxbourg Poissonière, almost opposite to me; I'll go about this.'

"Ah! here is what I want. How lucky! Rue Richer, near the Fauxbourg Poissonière: it is impossible I can miss finding the owner of the Souvenir. To morrow I will take it to Mme. Caroline Dorville. Reading her tablets has given me a curiosity to see her. It was so dark to-night; and, besides, I scarcely looked at her. But it would seem she must be fashionable, handsome, and at bottom good-hearted."

Jean replaced the Souvenir in the recticule, and went to bed, musing on what he had read.

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